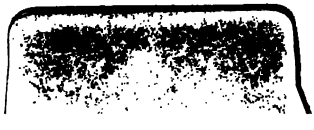
THE ART OF LETTER WRITING

Illustrated by Examples From the Best Authors

THOMAS · NELSON · AND · SONS.
LONDON · EDINBURGH · AND · NEW · YORK



THE ART

OF

LETTER-WRITING.

ILLUSTRATED BY

Examples from the Best Authors.

"Now let us take our leave.
At Milan, let me hear from thee by letters
Of thy success in life, and what news else
Betideth here in absence of thy friend;
And I likewise will visit thee with mine."

LONDON:
T. NELSON AND SONS, PATERNOSTER ROW;
EDINBURGH; AND NEW YORK.

1867.

Simple Directions for Letter-Writing.

THE best directions for good reading are: Read as you speak, read as you feel, read as if you felt what you are saying; so the best directions for good writing are: Write as you speak, write just what you have to say, write exactly the things you feel, exactly the words you would say if your correspondent were sitting by you—in short, to use Lady Hesketh's phrase, write "what comes uppermost;" so your letters will be true, fresh, life-like and interesting.

The best direction that could be given for letter-writing is, to ask you to call imagination to your aid. Fancy your friend or correspondent to be sitting by you, say what you would say if such were the case, and then write it down. Do this, and your letter cannot fail to be what a letter ought to be,—a picture of *your* thoughts, interesting to your correspondent in exactly the same proportion as he or she is interested in yourself or your concerns.

No one speaks in the longest words he can pick out of the dictionary; no one speaks in studied phrases, such as may be read in pedantic books; and no one ought to write in such. The best writing for letters is natural, unstudied flowing fresh from the heart—just "what comes uppermost."

Cowper, one of the most pleasing of letter-writers, one who best understood the art, says he "likes *talking* letters." This little word reveals the secret of letter-writing. If your friend likes you he will like your talk; and if your letters are to be (as they are intended to be) a substitute for your presence, they must be *talking* letters—letters written just as you would speak if your friend were present.

The same direction may be given even for letters of business; for if your head is full of the business in which you are engaged, and if you are doing it heartily, your words will flow freely in speaking. Write down what you would say, do not wait to study phrases, and your letters will be ten times more to the point than all the fancy models ever written by uninterested people. Every one possesses a degree of natural eloquence on subjects which touch the feelings deeply. A mother pleading for a situation for her son, a father interceding in behalf of a child, if they will but write down the words that rise naturally to their lips, will write from the heart a thousandfold better than a letter in the most studied phrases, written as a model by a person *fancying*, not *feeling*, the case.

In this little book, therefore, we offer you not models to copy, but specimens of the styles of others, by which you may see the easy, unconstrained, playful style in which the best writers have written their letters.

The style of their books and studied compositions may be lofty, grave, or even stiff; the friendly letter is easy and unstudied.

By ease, however, we do not mean slovenliness or imprudence. There are many things that ought not to be said, and, of course, should still less be written; as an idle or ill-natured word spoken may be forgotten, but if written it remains as a witness against the writer. An attention to correctness in spelling and grammar is of course necessary, to escape being

thought wholly uneducated; and there are many little common decorums and etiquettes in the modes of addressing others with which it is well to be acquainted.

For all these, it may be profitable to read a few specimens of really good letters by good writers; that by observing these we may form our own style by them, not copy them.

"The fundamental requisite for good writing," says Blair (speaking of letter-writing), "is to be natural and simple." The style ought to be easy and unconstrained. For this reason the style of letters has often been chosen by those who wished to communicate instruction or give information in a simple form. These differ, of course, from the ordinary letters of one friend to another, as, though written in the same style, they are more on subjects of general interest. A few specimens of these also are given.

"Much of the merit and the agreeableness of epistolary writing will depend on its introducing us into some acquaintance with the writer. There, if anywhere, we look for the man, not for the author. Its first and fundamental requisite is, to be natural and simple; for a stiff and laboured manner is as bad in a letter as it is in conversation. This does not banish sprightliness and wit. These are graceful in letters, just as they are in conversation,—when they flow easily, and without being studied,—when employed so as to season, not to cloy. One who, either in conversation or in letters, affects to shine and to sparkle always, will not please long. The style of letters should not be too highly polished. It ought to be neat and correct, but no more. All nicety about words betrays study; and hence musical periods, and appearances of number and harmony in arrangement, should be carefully avoided in letters. The best letters are commonly such as the authors have written with most facility. What the heart or the imagination dictates always flows readily; but where

there is no subject to warm or interest these, constraint appears; and hence, those letters of mere compliment, congratulation, or affected condolence, which have cost the authors most labour in composing, and which, for that reason, they perhaps consider as their masterpieces, never fail of being the most disagreeable and insipid to readers."

THE ART OF LETTER-WRITING.

PART I.

Letters on Letter-Writing.

LORD JEFFREY TO MR. R. MOREHEAD.

HERBERTSHIRE, 22*nd Dec.* 1795.

MY DEAR BOB,—I miss you more here than I did in Edinburgh; and, though I only came here yesterday, I can live no longer without talking to you in some way or other. While I was at home, I used to imagine that you were here as usual, and did not feel myself more separated than I was during the whole of last winter. But here, where I am so much accustomed to be with you, I am made sensible of wanting you morning, noon, and night, &c.

Have you ever observed that the letters of friends are filled with egotism? For my part I think very suspiciously of every letter that is not, and propose my own as a model to you in this respect. Indeed, when a man writes, as I do now, merely from the loquacity of friendship, and the recollection of personal intimacy, what subject can he have but himself, or the person to whom he writes? His letter, therefore, will be a succession of egotisms and inquiries, which will fall to be answered by egotisms and retaliated inquiries. Such letters are

to me always the most interesting, and indeed the only interesting; for surely whatever you tell me, or whatever reflection you make, might have been conveyed to me by any other channel, and is only interesting by its distant relation to you. I believe this is true with every other composition as well as letters, and all the pathetic passages in an author will be found to be egotistical to the feelings of the speaker. For as no other can feel as strongly a man's situation as himself, his own account of it must always be the most animated, and more engaging, for the most part, than his account of anything else. I don't know why I have been led so far from myself as to tell you all this, but I return immediately upon recollection. I want to know what you are studying, and what distribution you make of your time. I have been doing little but vexing myself with law.

JANE TAYLOR TO MISS S. L. C.

COLCHESTER, *March* 14, 1811.

MY DEAR L.,—Not to be behindhand with you in generosity, I take this whole sheet, although I have so recently despatched one. But I will not promise to fill it; or, if I do, it must be with mere *chat*. Yet as I feel disposed to say a little more than a note ought to contain, I do not see why I should not follow the impulse. How melancholy would be our banishment from friends, if it were not for this delightful substitute for personal intercourse! it is indeed a privilege, which, though so common, ought to be regarded with thankfulness. I often think, when enjoying it, of what I used to repeat when I was a good child,—

> "Then thanks to my friends for their care in my breeding,
> Who taught me betimes to love *writing* and reading."

There are, indeed, many times when letter-writing appears a very slow and insufficient means of communication: I have felt it so often since you left us, when I have longed for such a kind of *tête-à-tête* as *tête alone* cannot enjoy. But whether or

not I shall ever be indulged with more of your much loved society than heretofore, I hope *this* channel of communication will never be cut off.

JANE TAYLOR TO MISS E. M.

MARAZION, *May* 31, 1815.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Although I quite forget the date of my last, I know that I have many times since felt much inclined to converse with you; and that I have not written before is only owing to the constant recurrence of some employment that is more immediately pressing, and whose plea is more readily admitted, because it is usually something that requires less exertion than writing, even to so kind and candid a friend as you, to whom I know the most simple expressions of regard are more agreeable than a studied epistle. Some people think it a great recommendation to be able to write a "clever letter;" but if there is anything I dislike to receive, or that I am unambitious of writing, it is a *clever* letter: by which I mean a letter that exhibits obviously an endeavour to be smart and pointed; or worse still—fine and sentimental. In this I am sure you will think with me. But to my languid mind, it is generally an effort to say anything beyond how d'ye do; and therefore I often delay the task in hope of an hour of vigour, till those who are oftenest remembered might fairly imagine themselves forgotten. But now, though I am flat and chilly, and have more than half a headache, I am determined to spend the morning with you.

TO A VERY YOUNG LADY—J. A. TO M. C.

MY DEAR MARY,—Though I have written you twenty-three letters, yet I have not had a single one in reply. "Very well," I seem to hear you say, "this is just as it should be: it is time enough for me to begin to be a letter-writer." That will depend, Miss Mary, very much on the kind of letters you write. I know that some young girls make themselves very

ridiculous by a sort of rage for corresponding with their acquaintances. But nothing is more proper than for a young lady, even of the most tender years, to write a little letter to her mother, her brother, or her teacher, or to such an elderly friend as myself, for example. Such epistles give great pleasure. When your brother goes to college, there are few things which he will value more than a letter from his sister.

What I wish you to consider is, that whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well. There is a right and a wrong way even in letter-writing; and if you wish to write well when you are grown up, begin to write well now.

Be sure that you have something to say. It is poor work to seat yourself at your desk, and bite your nails, and dip your pen in the ink fifty times, before you can come at a thought. Young people mistake, also, as to what should be put in a letter. You need not try to write fine sentences and big words. If you try to do so, you will learn to write affectedly, and the habit may stick by you all your life. Think of what you would say to your brother, if he were sitting by you, and holding your hand. That is just the thing he will like to read. Is it a pleasant little piece of news? Put it down; it is the very thing. Is it a kind wish that he were by you? Down with it; it will be better still. Is it some little project you have of surprising your dear parents with a Christmas present? Write it down. Writing a letter is only talking with a pen. Be simple, natural, unaffected, and affectionate, and your letter will be sure to please. I know of nothing which injures a letter so much as *effort*. By this I mean trying to do better than you can. The pleasantest letters I ever received were from ladies; and the best of these were those which seemed to trickle out of the pen, as if the writer never thought what was to come next. Remember what I say,—*Effort spoils letter-writing.*

I do not mean that you should be careless in writing. By no means. Be careless in nothing. All your life, make it a rule to do everything as well as you can. Take a fair sheet of purely white paper. Be sure you have a perfectly good pen, and the very blackest ink. Get your mother to show you

where to begin, where the date is to be, and how far from the top you should write the little opening salutation. Leave a sufficient blank margin. Take pains to spell every word right, and to place your commas and other stops exactly; to dot every *i*, and cross every *t*. Learn to close and sign your name in a becoming way. Do not delay to find out the neatest and most elegant mode of folding and sealing your letter, and direct it on the outside in a fair, legible hand. Do every part of this with your own hands.

It is good to practise what we learn; so, pray, begin at once; get your pen and paper, write your letter, fold and seal it, and then write on the back the name of your friend and well-wisher.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

Monday, *March* 20, 1786.

THOSE mornings that I set apart for writing to you, my dearest cousin, are my holiday mornings. At those times I give myself a dispensation from all poetical employments, and as soon as I cease to converse with you, betake myself to a walk in the garden. You will observe, therefore, that my health cannot possibly suffer much by such a procedure, but is rather likely to be benefited; for, finding it easy as well as pleasant to write when I write to you, I consequently spend less time at my desk than when Homer lies before me, and have more opportunity of taking exercise and air. Though you *seem* to be so, you are not in *fact* beforehand with me in what you say of my letters, for it has long been an agreed point between me and Mrs. Unwin that yours are the best in the world. You will say,—"That is impossible, for I always write what comes uppermost, and never trouble myself either about method or expression." And for that very reason, my dear, they are what they are—so good that they could not be better. As to expression, you have no need to study it; yours is sure to be such as it ought: and as to method, you know as well as I, that it is never more out of its place than in a letter. I have only to add on this subject, that not a word of all this

is designed as a compliment to you, but merely as a justification of our opinion.

This day puts me in mind of June—clear sun and soft air. Mrs. Unwin never walks in the garden without looking at the borders, to consider which of all the flowers will be blown in June. She has my fear of strangers, but she has no fear of *you*. *Au contraire*, she, as well as somebody else, most heartily loves and longs to see you.—Adieu, my dear coz, ever yours.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

OLNEY, *April* 24, 1786.

YOUR letters are so much my comfort, that I often tremble lest by any accident I should be disappointed; and the more because you have been, more than once, so engaged in company on the writing day, that I have had a narrow escape. Let me give you a piece of good counsel, my cousin; follow my laudable example—write when you can; take Time's forelock in one hand and a pen in the other, and so make sure of your opportunity. It is well for me that you write faster than anybody, and more in an hour than other people in two, else I know not what would become of me. When I read your letters I hear you talk, and I love talking letters dearly, especially from you. Well! the middle of June will not be always a thousand years off, and when it comes I shall hear you, and see you too, and shall not care a farthing then if you do not touch a pen in a month. By the way, you must either send me or bring me some more paper, for before the moon shall have performed a few more revolutions I shall not have a scrap left—and tedious revolutions they are just now, that is certain.

I give you leave to be as peremptory as you please, especially at a distance; but when you say you are a Cowper (and the better it is for the Cowpers that such you are, and I give them joy of you, with all my heart), you must not forget that I boast myself a Cowper too, and have my humours, and fancies, and purposes, and determinations, as well as others of my name, and hold them as fast as they can. *You* indeed tell

me how often I shall see you when you come! A pretty story, truly. I am a *he* Cowper, my dear, and claim the privileges that belong to my noble sex. But these matters shall be settled, as my cousin Agamemnon used to say, at a more convenient time.

The grass begins to grow, and the leaves to bud, and everything is preparing to be beautiful against you come.—Adieu.

COWPER TO JOSEPH HILL, ESQ.

February 18 and 20, 1783.

My Dear Friend,—In writing to you I never want a subject. Self is always at hand, and self, with its concerns, is always interesting to a friend.

You may think, perhaps, that having commenced poet by profession, I am always writing verses. Not so. I have written nothing, at least finished nothing, since I published, except a certain facetious history of John Gilpin, which Mr. Unwin would send to the public advertiser. Perhaps you might read it without suspecting the author.

My book procures me favours which my modesty will not permit me to specify, except one which, modest as I am, I cannot suppress—a very handsome letter from Dr. Franklin at Passy. These fruits it has brought me.

I have been refreshing myself with a walk in the garden, where I find that January (who, according to Chaucer, was the husband of May) being dead, February has married the widow.—Yours, &c.

COWPER TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON.

April 5, 1783.

My Dear Friend,—When one has a letter to write, there is nothing more useful than to make a beginning. In the first place, because unless it be begun, there is no good reason to hope it will ever be ended; and, secondly, because the beginning is half the business; it being much more difficult to put

the pen in motion at first, than to continue the progress of it when once moved.

COWPER TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN.

May 12, 1783.

My Dear Friend,—A letter written from such a place as this is a creation; and creation is a work for which mere mortal man is very indifferently qualified. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, is a maxim that applies itself in every case where Deity is not concerned. With this view of the matter, I should charge myself with extreme folly for pretending to work without materials, did I not know, that although nothing should be the result, even that nothing will be welcome. If I can tell you no news, I can tell you at least that I esteem you highly; that my friendship with you and yours is the only balm of my life—a comfort sufficient to reconcile me to an existence destitute of every other. This is not the language of to-day, only the effect of a transient cloud suddenly brought over me, and suddenly to be removed, but punctually expressive of my habitual frame of mind, such as it has been these ten years.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

The Lodge, *May* 12, 1788.

It is probable, my dearest coz, that I shall not be able to write much, but as much as I can I will. The time between rising and breakfast is all that I can at present find, and this morning I lay longer than usual.

In the style of the lady's note to you I can easily perceive a smatch of her character. Neither men nor women write with such neatness of expression, who have not given a good deal of attention to language, and qualified themselves by study. At the same time, it gave me much more pleasure to observe that my coz, though not standing on the pinnacle of renown quite so elevated as that which lifts Mrs. Montagu to the clouds, falls in no degree short of her in this particular;

so that should she make you a member of her academy, she will do it honour. Suspect me not of flattering you, for I abhor the thought; neither *will* you suspect it. Recollect that it is an invariable rule with me, never to pay compliments to those I love.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

THE LODGE, *June* 6, 1789.

RUNNING over what I have written, I feel that I should blush to send it to any but thyself. Another would charge me with being impelled by a vanity from which my conscience sets me clear, to speak so much of myself and my verses as I do. But I thus speak to none but thee, nor to thee do I thus speak from any such motives. I egotize in my letters to thee, not because I am of much importance to myself, but because to thee both *Ego* and all that *Ego* does is interesting. God doth know that when I labour most to excel as a poet, I do it under such mortifying impressions of the vanity of all human fame and glory, however acquired, that I wonder I can write at all.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

WESTON LODGE, *Feb.* 4, 1790.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—A letter of mine is no sooner sealed and sent than I begin to be dissatisfied with and to hate it. I have accordingly hated the two letters that I have sent to *you* since your departure, on many accounts, but principally because they have neither of them expressed any proportion of what I have felt. I have mourned for the loss of you, and they have not said so. Deal with them as you desire me, for another reason, to deal with yours,—burn them, for they deserve it.

PART II.

Letters of Sympathy.

BISHOP BURNET TO LADY RUSSELL,

ON THE DEATH OF HER SON.

SALISBURY, *30th May* 1711.

I CANNOT keep myself from writing though I cannot tell how to express the deep sense I have of this heavy stroke with which God is trying your faith and patience. To lose the only son of such a father, who was become so truly his son in all respects, is indeed a new opening a deep wound which God had, by many special providences, for several years been binding up and healing. But now you will see whether you can truly say, "Not my will, but thy will be done." For God's sake do not abandon yourself once more into a deep, inconsolable melancholy. Rouse up the spirit God has given you, and say, "The Lord has given, the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." When God took his blessed father, he was left as a branch to spring up in his stead: now God has taken him, but the branches are left in whom he is to live again. Remember you are now much older than when you suffered yourself to sink so much under a great, though a just load. You cannot now stand under what you bore then; and you do not know but that, as God has helped you in so eminent a manner to do your duty to your own children, he may yet have a great deal for you to do to your children's children; and, therefore, study to compose your spirits into a

resignation to the holy will of God, and see what remains for you yet to be done, before your course is finished. I could not help giving this vent to that true and hearty concern I have in everything that touches you in so tender a part. I can do no more but follow this with my most earnest prayers to the God of all comfort for you and all yours, more particularly for the sweet remnants of him whom God has taken to himself.—I am, beyond all expression, madam, your most humble and most obedient servant.

JANE TAYLOR TO MISS M. H.

CONDOLENCE IN AFFLICTION.

ONGAR, *March* 7, 1812.

. . . HAVING never yet been called to encounter trials so severe as those with which you have been exercised, I know I cannot fully enter into your feelings: and, indeed, in all cases it is so true that "the heart knoweth its own bitterness," that in general, perhaps, silent sympathy is the best kind of condolence. "To weep with those that weep," is, I believe, often an alleviation of grief; and the tenderest friendship can do little more than this. It is well that, at those times when the weakness and insufficiency of all human support are peculiarly manifest, such consolations are received from above as enable mourners to rejoice in their losses, and to say, "It is well for me that I have been afflicted." If the sympathy of earthly friends is soothing and grateful to the wounded mind, how consolatory must it be to know and feel that, even in the midst of chastisement, "the Lord pitieth us as a father his children." You know Montgomery's "Joy of Grief," and have felt its touching sweetness more perhaps than I can do. You have lost a friend—a brother; and you have, I doubt not, enjoyed that sabbath of the mind which Christian resignation produces. In the common harassing trials and vexations of life, there is seldom any mixture of that joy which soothes and tranquillizes the mind under severer trials. But these painful bereavements which, when contemplated at a distance, appear

perhaps too heavy to be borne, are rendered supportable by the strong consolations with which they are usually attended; and most frequently become occasions of thankfulness, on account of their salutary effects on the mind.

Prone as our earthly spirits are to cleave unto the dust, what should we be if all our worldly hopes were to be realized! Wise and kind is that system of discipline under which we are all placed; and when, at the close of life, we come to look back upon our mental history, we shall never be inclined to say of this affliction, or of that mortification, "It might have been spared." We shall then see that our prayers for spirituality of mind were answered by the removal of those worldly joys which produced a contrary disposition; and that when we desired that "our affections might be set on things above," our dearest friends were taken there, that so heaven might become dearer, and earth less attractive. Such weaning events must tend, not only to reconcile our minds to the shortness of life, but to make us rejoice in it. We feel that "they are light afflictions," because "they are but for a moment."

THE REV. JOHN FOSTER TO THE REV. JOSIAH HILL,

ON THE DEATH OF HIS WIFE.

STAPLETON, *December* 26, 1828.

WHAT shall I, can I say, to my dear old friend, on whom the hand of God has been so heavily and mysteriously laid? This has been the question with me from day to day, while each returning morning I have been resolving not to let the day pass without an attempt to speak to him in terms of commiseration; and still a constant feeling of utter impotence has frustrated my resolution. To *Him* alone who has afflicted it belongs to impart the merciful influence to sustain you under the overwhelming calamity. And I pray him to enable you to yield yourself up to him in resignation, and repose on him for support. May all that you so firmly believe, and have so often cogently taught, of the consoling efficacy of faith in the

divine goodness, be realized to you now in your season of deepest distress! It *is* all true—you *know* in whom you have believed, and that he is all-sufficient to console his servants, in the most painful and melancholy scenes in which his sovereign dispensations may place them. He does not bring them under oppressive trials to desert them there, and leave them to their own feeble strength. He *will* not leave you; he *can* sustain you—and I trust he will give you power to lay hold on him for strength.

From your letter previous to the last, I could not help admitting some dark and painful forebodings; insomuch that the external signs on your last gave me a strong intimation of what it was to tell me. Yet I had, till receiving it, indulged some little hope that our dear friend might be recalled from the fatal brink, to remain a companion and a blessing to her family. But the sovereign authority, the voice which angels and saints obey, still called Onwards. She was appointed for other society. She has now entered into it,—in a scene whence all her warm affection for those she has left behind (an affection, we may well believe, inextinguishable by death) would not move in her happy spirit a wish to return. In that society no doubt she has joined, for one dear and happy associate, her admirable son, who had gone before, as if on purpose to congratulate her on her arrival. If you could know the heavenly rapture of those mutual felicitations! "Too happy," you would say, "too happy *there* for me to wish those beloved beings were, even for my sake, again in a world like this. Rather let me patiently go on my journey, deprived of their loved companionship, till I shall obtain it again—where I can never lose it more." How soon the few fleeting years of our remaining life will be gone! Oh, that they may, through the discipline of the Divine Spirit, be a process to prepare us to mingle in the felicities of our departed, sainted friends, and gratefully exulting in the presence of Him who has exalted them from this sinful world to his own blessed abodes! I have lived for several years in the apprehension of being visited by such a dispensation as that under which you are suffering, and there has been a degree of consolation in the

thought that I am too far advanced in life for the deprivation, if it should be inflicted, to be a loss of very long duration.

By this time, what was mortal of our dear friend has been consigned to its resting-place in darkness and silence; and I can pensively sympathize in the profound musings in which your spirit is drawn to follow the immortal part. Oh, what is the transition? Whither is that immortal essence gone? In what higher manner does it live, and know, and exert its faculties, no longer involved in the dark tabernacle of dying flesh? Our departed friend does not come to reveal it to us. But enough to know that it is a deliverance from all pains, and weakness, and fears,—a deliverance from *sin*, that most dreadful thing in the universe. And it is to be past death—to have accomplished that one amazing act which we have yet undone before us, and are to do. It is to know what that awful and mysterious thing is, and that its pains and terrors are gone past for ever. "I have died," our beloved friend says now, with exultation, "and I live to die no more! I have conquered through the blood of the Lamb."

COWPER TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON,

ON THE DEATH OF HIS CHILD.

October 16, 1783.

My Dear Friend,—To have sent a child to heaven is a great honour and a great blessing, and your feelings on such an occasion may well be such as render you rather an object of congratulation than of condolence. And were it otherwise, yet, having yourself free access to all the sources of genuine consolation, I feel that it would be little better than impertinence in me to suggest any. An escape from a life of suffering to a life of happiness and glory, is such a deliverance as leaves no room for the sorrow of survivors, unless they sorrow for themselves. We cannot, indeed, lose what we love without regretting it; but a Christian is in possession of such alleviations of that regret as the world knows nothing of. Their beloveds, when they die, go they know not whither; and if they suppose them, as they generally do, in a state of happiness,

they have yet but an indifferent prospect of joining them in that state hereafter. But it is not so with you. You both know whither your beloved is gone, and you know that you shall follow her; and you know also that in the meantime she is incomparably happier than yourself. So far, therefore, as she is concerned, nothing has come to pass but what was most fervently to be wished.

COWPER TO THE REV. WALTER BAGOT,

ON THE DEATH OF HIS WIFE.

OLNEY, *February* 27, 1786.

ALAS! alas! my dear, dear friend, may God himself comfort you! I will not be so absurd as to attempt it. By the close of your letter, it should seem that in this hour of great trial he withholds not his consolations from you. I know by experience that they are neither few nor small; and though I feel for you as I never felt for man before, yet do I sincerely rejoice in this, that whereas there is but one true Comforter in the universe, under affliction such as yours, you both know him, and know where to seek him. I thought you a man the most happily mated that I had ever seen, and had great pleasure in your felicity. Pardon me, if now I feel a wish that, short as my acquaintance with her was, I had never seen her. I should have mourned with you, but not as I do now. Mrs. Unwin sympathizes with you also most sincerely, and you neither are nor will be soon forgotten in such prayers as we can make at Olney. I will not detain you longer now, my poor afflicted friend, than to commit you to the tender mercy of God, and to bid you a sorrowful adieu!—Adieu! ever yours.

COWPER TO THE REV. WALTER BAGOT,

ON THE DEATH OF HIS BROTHER.

WESTON, *May* 4, 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—While your sorrow for our common loss was fresh in your mind, I would not write, lest a letter

on so distressing a subject should be too painful both to you and me; and now that I seem to have reached a proper time for doing it, the multiplicity of my literary business will hardly afford me leisure. Both you and I have this comfort when deprived of those we love,—at our time of life we have every reason to believe that the deprivation cannot be long. Our sun is setting too; and when the hour of rest arrives we shall rejoin your brother, and many whom we have tenderly loved, our forerunners into a better country.

I will say no more on a theme which it will be better perhaps to treat with brevity; and because the introduction of any other might seem a transition too violent, I will only add that Mrs. Unwin and I are about as well as we at any time have been within the last year.—Truly yours.

PART III.

On the Death of Relations.

LORD JEFFREY TO MR. J. JEFFREY,

ON THE DEATH OF THEIR GRANDMOTHER.

EDINBURGH, *4th March* 1799.

MY DEAR JOHN,—I wrote you a dull letter of news yesterday, for the packet, and have tasked myself to make a kind of duplicate of it, to go by some ship or other from London, &c.

My first article of intelligence relates to our poor grandmother's death. She died on the 22nd of last month; and as literally and truly of old age, I believe, as any of the old patriarchs did. She had been wasting away, by sensible degrees, for several months, and died at last without pain or struggle. It was an event so long expected that it occasioned little emotion to anybody. Miss Crockett, who was naturally most affected by it, very soon recovered her ordinary spirits and tranquillity. I declare to you, I do not know anybody so worthy of admiration and esteem as this cousin of ours. She has sacrificed, not only her youth and her comfort to the discharge of an interesting duty, but has voluntarily given up the improvement of her manners and her understanding for the sake of it. Yet it requires reflection to find out all the merit; and there was something so unostentatious and unaffected, in the whole course of her attention, that it never struck us as a thing to be wondered at, &c.

LORD JEFFREY TO MR. R. MOREHEAD,

TELLING OF THE DEATH OF HIS SON.

EDINBURGH, *25th Oct.* 1802.

MY DEAR BOB,—You may imagine with what anguish I sit down to tell you that our sweet little boy died this morning about 5 o'clock. He was seized in the evening with a sort of convulsion and fainting fits, and expired at the time I have mentioned.

Mrs. J. is better than I could have expected, considering the weak state of her health, the suddenness of this calamity, and the affection with which she doted on the baby that had cost her so dearly.

We are still distracted with a thousand agonizing recollections, but I hope by-and-by to be more composed.—Believe me always, dear Bob, most affectionately yours.

REV. J. FOSTER TO MR. HILL,

AFTER THE DEATH OF MRS. FOSTER.

I HAVE returned *hither*, but have an utter repugnance to say —returned *home;* that name is applicable no longer. You may be sure I am grateful for your kind sympathy and suggestions of consolation; not the less so for its being too true that there is a weight on the heart which the most friendly human heart cannot remove. The melancholy fact is, that my beloved, inestimable companion, has left me. It comes upon me—in evidence how various and sad! And yet, for a moment, sometimes I feel as if I could not realize it as true. There is something that seems to say,—Can it be that I shall still, one day after another, find she is not here; that her affectionate voice and look will never accost me, the kind grasp of her hand never more be felt; that when I would be glad to consult her, make an observation to her, address to her some expression of love, call her "my dear wife," as I have done so many thousand times, it will be in vain—she is not

here? Several times, a considerable number—even since I followed her to the tomb—a momentary suggestion of thought has been, as one and another circumstance has occurred, "I will tell Maria of this." Even this very day, when I parted with Dr. Stenson, who out of pure kindness accompanied me a long stage on the road, there was actually for a transient instant a lapse of mind into the idea of telling her how very kind he had been. I have not suffered, nor expect to feel, any overwhelming emotions, any violent excesses of grief. What I expect to feel is, a long repetition of pensive monitions of my irreparable loss; that the painful truth will speak itself to me again, and still again, in long succession, often in solitary reflection (in which I feel the most), and often as objects come in my sight, or circumstances arise, which have some association with her who is gone. The things which belonged to her with a personal appropriation; things which she used or particularly valued; things which she had given me, or I had given her; her letters, or my own to her; the corner of the chamber where I know she used to pray; her absence—unalterable absence—at the hour of family worship, of social reading, of the domestic table; her no more being in her place to receive me on my return home from occasional absence; the thought of what she would have said, or how she would have acted, on subjects or occasions that come in question; the remembrance how she *did* speak or act in similar instances;—all such things as these will renew the pensive emotions, and tell me still again what I have lost,—what that was, and how great its value, which the Sovereign Disposer has in his unerring wisdom taken away. Yes, it is *He* that has taken away what it was *He* that gave me, and what was so dear and valuable to me; and I would not, I think I do not, rebel against his dispensation; I would not even repine or complain beyond that degree which he will regard with a merciful compassion. I should and would be thankful for having been indulged with the possession so long. Certainly neither of us would, if such an exception *might* be made to an eternal law, recall our dear departed companions from their possession of that triumph over sin, and sorrow,

and death, to which they have been exalted. However great our deprivation, how transcendently greater is their advancement in the condition of existence! And we should be unworthy to be loved by them still, as I trust that even at this very hour we are, if we could for a moment entertain such a wish.

. . . . I do hope that through the mercy of the Father of spirits even this loss shall be turned to gain to myself and the children, the care of whom now devolves on me in a much greater degree than heretofore. I hope that the solemn and affectionate thought of her who has gone from us, will, for each of us, give a powerful re-enforcement to every admonition and persuasion of religion; that the aspiration, "May we meet her again, where friends will part no more," will often be an affecting motive to follow in the path by which she has gone to immortal happiness. What an inestimable advantage it is, for the effect of instruction to her daughters, that she can with perfect confidence be cited to them, and recalled by their own thoughts, as a nearly faultless pattern, in both judgment and conduct! Her intellect was strong and disciplined; her course of action was invariably conscientious in the highest degree; her piety was deep and reflective,—bearing, however, very much from this reflectiveness itself, a somewhat more melancholy tinge than I would desire for her daughters. In thinking of them, I will not dwell on the consideration,—how different to their juvenile feelings, after a while, will be this loss, from what it must continue to be to mine. May God enable us, my dear friend, with ever-increasing force of faith, to commit ourselves and our children to his mercy and his power.

PART IV.

Letters of Friendship.

LORD JEFFREY TO HIS COUSIN, MISS CROCKETT.

OXFORD, *9th March* 1792.

MY DEAR CROCKE,—I fancy I have provoked you. I have entirely forgotten what I wrote in my last, but recollect that it was written immediately after a very hearty dinner, on a very cold and a very cloudy day. I conclude it was incredibly amusing. I beg your pardon—I excuse your silence—and I proceed. But I would excuse anything at present, for I am mollified and melted to the very temper of a lamb within these three weeks, and all owing to the reading of some very large and admirably elegant books; which have so stupified and harassed my understanding, so exercised and confirmed my patience, and, withal, so petrified and deadened my sensibility, that I can no longer perceive or resent any injury or affront that might be offered me. I have just intellect enough remaining to suggest the impropriety of proclaiming this my unhappy state, so tempting to insult or malice: but I know to whom I confide the secret, and I know that I am safe; for benevolence and compassion, especially when allied to a genuine nobility of spirit, will never take advantage of infirmity of misfortune; and the assurance of impunity can only be a temptation to the ungenerous and unfeeling. Now I beg you would never think of copying such sentences as these—I mean when you write to me on any other occasion. I am sure your purer

taste must render the caution superfluous. There is a charm in simplicity and naturality of expression, for which neither excellent sense, nor egregious sentiment, nor splendid diction, can compensate. But this simplicity, in this vile, conceited, and puerile age, it is infinitely difficult to acquire; and all our best writers since Shakspeare, except the gentle Addison, and sometimes Sterne, have given up the attempt in despair, and trusted to gaudier vehicles for the conveyance of their respective reputations to the ears of posterity and the mansion of fame; which practice, you will allow, is greatly to the prejudice of those who are taught to consider them as the models of fine writing. However, I intend in a year or two to correct the depravity of taste, and to revive the simple and the sublime in all their purity, and in all their majesty. This, you will perceive, is private and confidential. I wish you understood Latin, and particularly Greek, that you might understand what it is that I am talking about; in which wish I doubt nothing you join me most cordially. Now you conceive I am grown a pedant; that I have done nothing but read law and language and science since I came here. Shall I tell you the truth, though it would be a pity to undeceive you in an error so flattering to my diligence and industry? I never was so dissipated in my life, being out almost every day, and pestered with languor all the morning. But the vacation is coming on, and we shall have leisure enow, and there will be nothing but reading, and then we will get learning enow, &c. . . . . Write me a letter as long as these two last of mine, and believe me yours sincerely.

LORD JEFFREY TO MR. R. MOREHEAD,

ON A JOURNEY.

EDINBURGH, *20th September* 1799.

MY DEAR BOBBY,—I am happy to tell you that I found Mainie* almost entirely recovered from her late illness, and in every respect a great deal better than I had expected.

* His sister Mary.

This is the first chapter, and now I come to myself; and a whole chapter of accidents I have to indite on that subject, though I am not sure if I shall have the patience to present you with the whole of it. I was roused carefully half an hour before four yesterday morning, and passed two delightful hours in the kitchen waiting for the mail. There was an enormous fire, and a whole houseful of smoke. The waiter was snoring with great vehemency upon one of the dressers, and the deep, regular intonation had a very solemn effect, I can assure you, in the obscurity of that Tartarean region, and the melancholy silence of the morning. An innumerable number of rats were trotting and gibbering in one end of the place, and the rain clattered freshly on the windows. The dawn heavily in clouds brought on the day, but not, alas! the mail; and it was long past five when the guard came galloping into the yard, upon a smoking horse, with all the wet bags lumbering beside him (like Scylla's water-dogs), roaring out that the coach was broken down somewhere near Dundee, and commanding another steed be got ready for his transportation. The noise he made brought out the other two sleepy wretches that had been waiting like myself for places, and we at length persuaded the heroic champion to order a post-chaise instead of a horse; into which we crammed ourselves all four with a whole mountain of leather bags, that clung about our legs like the entrails of a fat cow, all the rest of the journey. At Kinross, as the morning was very fine, we prevailed with the guard to go on the outside to dry himself, and got on to the ferry about eleven, after encountering various perils and vexations, in the loss of horse-shoes and wheel-pins, and in a great gap in the road, over which we had to lead the horses and haul the carriage separately. At this place we supplicated our agitator for leave to eat a little breakfast; bnt he would not stop an instant, and we were obliged to snatch up a roll or two a-piece to gnaw the dry crusts during our passage, to keep soul and body together. We got in soon after one, and I have spent my time in eating, drinking, sleeping, and other recreations, down to the present hour. This is the conclusion of my journal, you see. Yours is not in such forwardness. But I hope the part of it that has

been performed out of my guidance has been prosperous and agreeable. I rather think my return must have been a riddance to you, for I was both dull and ill-tempered during the last days of our travelling, &c.

And now farewell to you, my trusty travelling companion. We shall make another trip together again, I hope, very soon; and, in the meantime, try to make as few trips as possible asunder. I am persuaded that they are good things both for the mind and the body, and are very amusing, both past, present, and future; which is more than you can say of any other kind of gratification.

Remember me very kindly to Mrs. Morehead, and her children twain, Mrs. B. and all the other members of that illustrious family, to all my friends and acquaintances, and, lastly, to the whole human race, rich and poor, friends and foes. Amen.—I am, dear Bob, always most affectionately yours.

JANE TAYLOR TO MR. J. C.

MARAZION, *September* 23, 1814.

. . . Now that you are so much a man of business, I should really scruple to intrude upon you with four pages of *thoughts* and *reflections*, if I were not persuaded that there are frequent moments when, in all respects essential to true friendship and friendly intercourse, you are what you were in times that are past. And as I feel it to be pleasant and refreshing to sit down and converse with you as we were wont, so I have no doubt you will still peruse the somethings or nothings that may escape from my pen with a kindred feeling. Months have passed since I wrote to you; and in the interval I have travelled a hundred miles farther west, and seen many new places and faces: but this I can say (and I hope you will think it worth sending three hundred miles to tell you), that associating with strangers, so far from alienating my thoughts and affections from those I have long known and valued, attaches me still more to them. I am surrounded with those who know that I am—Miss Taylor; but know not that I am—"Jane;" and it sometimes makes me sigh for a renewal of intercourse

with those who, for that simple reason, have yielded me an unmerited share of their regard. The many follies, infirmities, and deficiencies, which are intimately known to them, may, it is true, be partially and for a time concealed from strangers; but yet, I would rather be with those who, "with all my faults, have loved me still." . . .

It is not from intention, but accident, that I am writing to you on this day of the month. You remember, I daresay, the advanced stage at which I am arrived: at five and twenty I regretted the departure of youth; but now I am quite reconciled to being as old as I am. In looking back upon the past, nothing strikes me so forcibly, for future benefit, as the different sensations occasioned by a review of its *misfortunes* and its *faults*. Upon seasons of care, anxiety, and distress, of which (though they have been comparatively few and light) I can remember some, I can reflect without a feeling of regret or uneasiness—indeed, there is a kind of satisfaction and complacency in looking back upon scenes of suffering; while the mistakes, follies, and sins that have marked my life, are sources of present and perpetual uneasiness. Of this, past experience and present feeling tend increasingly to convince me, that, whatever afflictions may be appointed for me in future, if, in the course of the next ten or twenty years (should I see so many), I shall attain more holiness, I shall also enjoy more happiness, than in the years that are past. To do quietly the duties of *to-day*, without ambition and without anxiety, is to ensure comfort: and comfort is a word that suits better the present state than happiness; and, in truth, it is all that would be desired by us if our thoughts were familiar with death and eternity—if we habitually remembered that the time is short, that all we are most interested about is passing away, and that the flower we best love fadeth. . . .

COWPER TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON.

September 11, 1784.

My Dear Friend,—Following your good example, I lay before me a sheet of my largest paper. It was this moment

fair and unblemished, but I have begun to blot it, and having begun, am not likely to cease till I have spoiled it. I have sent you many a sheet that, in my judgment of it, has been very unworthy of your acceptance; but my conscience was in some measure satisfied by reflecting that, if it were good for nothing, at the same time it cost you nothing, except the trouble of reading it. But the case is altered now. You must pay a solid price for frothy matter; and though I do not absolutely pick your pocket, yet you lose your money, and, as the saying is, are never the wiser—a saying literally fulfilled to the reader of my epistles.

My green-house is never so pleasant as when we are just upon the point of being turned out of it. The gentleness of the autumnal suns, and the calmness of this latter season, make it a much more agreeable retreat than we ever find it in summer—when, the winds being generally brisk, we cannot cool it by admitting a sufficient quantity of air, without being at the same time incommoded by it. But now I sit with all the windows and the door wide open, and am regaled with the scent of every flower in a garden as full of flowers as I have known how to make it. We keep no bees, but if I lived in a hive I should hardly hear more of their music. All the bees in the neighbourhood resort to a bed of mignionette opposite to the window, and pay me for the honey they get out of it by a hum which, though rather monotonous, is as agreeable to my ear as the whistling of my linnets. All the sounds that nature utters are delightful—at least in this country. I should not, perhaps, find the roaring of lions in Africa, or of bears in Russia, very pleasing; but I know no beast in England whose voice I do not account musical, save and except always the braying of an ass. The notes of all our birds and fowls please me, without one exception. I should not, indeed, think of keeping a goose in a cage, that I might hang him up in the parlour for the sake of his melody; but a goose upon a common, or in a farm-yard, is no bad performer. And as to insects, if the black beetle, and beetles indeed of all hues, will keep out of my way, I have no objection to any of the rest; on the contrary, in whatever key they sing, from the

gnat's fine treble to the bass of the humble bee, I admire them all. Seriously, however, it strikes me as a very observable instance of providential kindness to man, that such an exact accord has been contrived between his ear and the sounds with which, at least in a rural situation, it is almost every moment visited. All the world is sensible of the uncomfortable effect that certain sounds have upon the nerves, and consequently upon the spirits: and if a sinful world had been filled with such as would have curdled the blood, and have made the sense of hearing a perpetual inconvenience, I do not know that we should have had a right to complain. But now the fields, the woods, the gardens, have each their concert, and the ear of man is for ever regaled by creatures who seem only to please themselves. Even the ears that are deaf to the gospel are continually entertained, though without knowing it, by sounds for which they are solely indebted to its Author. There is somewhere in infinite space a world that does not roll within the precincts of mercy, and as it is reasonable, and even scriptural, to suppose that there is music in heaven, in those dismal regions perhaps the reverse of it is found—tones so dismal as to make woe itself more insupportable, and to acuminate even despair. But my paper admonishes me in good time to draw the reins, and to check the descent of my fancy into deeps with which she is but too familiar.—Our best love attends you both, with yours.

COWPER TO JOSEPH HILL, ESQ.

THANKS FOR A BARREL OF OYSTERS.

December 4, 1784.

My Dear Friend,—You have my hearty thanks for a very good barrel of oysters; which necessary acknowledgment once made, I might perhaps show more kindness by cutting short an epistle, than by continuing one, in which you are not likely to find your account, either in the way of information or amusement. The season of the year, indeed, is not very friendly to such communications. A damp atmosphere and a sunless sky

will have their effect upon the spirits; and when the spirits are checked, farewell to all hope of being good company, either by letter or otherwise. I envy those happy voyagers who, with so much ease, ascend to regions unsullied with a cloud, and date their epistles from an extramundane situation. No wonder if they outshine us who poke about in the dark below, in the vivacity of their sallies, as much as they soar above us in their excursions. Not but that I should be very sorry to go to the clouds for wit; on the contrary, I am satisfied that I discover more by continuing where I am. Every man to his business. Their vocation is, to see fine prospects, and to make pithy observations upon the world below; such as these, for instance—that the earth, beheld from a height that one trembles to think of, has the appearance of a circular plain; that England is a very rich and cultivated country, in which every man's property is ascertained by the hedges that intersect the lands; and that London and Westminster, seen from the neighbourhood of the moon, make but an insignificant figure. I admit the utility of these remarks: but in the meantime, as I say, *chacun à son gout;* and mine is rather to creep than fly, and to carry with me, if possible, an unbroken neck to the grave.—I remain, as ever, yours affectionately.

COWPER TO JOSEPH HILL, ESQ.

INQUIRING ABOUT A FRIEND'S HEALTH.

February 27, 1785.

My Dear Friend,—I write merely to inquire after your health, and with a sincere desire to hear that you are better. Horace somewhere advises his friend to give his client the slip, and come and spend the evening with him. I am not so inconsiderate as to recommend the same measure to you, because we are not such very near neighbours as a trip of that sort requires that we should be. But I do verily wish that you would favour me with just five minutes of the time that properly belongs to your clients, and place it to my account. Employ it, I mean, in telling me that you are better at least, *if not* recovered.

I have been pretty much indisposed myself since I wrote last; but, except in point of strength, am now as well as before. My disorder was what is commonly called and best understood by the name of a thorough cold; which, being interpreted, no doubt you will know, signifies shiverings, aches, burnings, lassitude, together with many other ills that flesh is heir to. James's powder is my nostrum on all such occasions, and never fails.—Yours, my dear friend.

COWPER TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN.

ON THE DEPARTURE OF FRIENDS.

July 27, 1785.

My Dear William,—You and your party left me in a frame of mind that indisposed me much to company. I comforted myself with the hope that I should spend a silent day, in which I should find abundant leisure to indulge sensations which, though of the melancholy kind, I yet wished to nourish. But that proved vain. In less than an hour after your departure, Mr. Greatheed made his appearance at the greenhouse door. We were obliged to ask him to dinner, and he dined with us. He is an agreeable, sensible, well-bred young man; but with all his recommendations I felt that on that occasion I could have spared him. So much better are the absent whom we love much, than the present whom we love a little. I have, however, made myself amends since, and nothing else having interfered, have sent many a thought after you.

Adieu! May the blessing of God be upon you all! It is your mother's heart's wish and mine.—Yours ever.

COWPER TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN.

ON EVIL-SPEAKING.

Olney, *September 24, 1786.*

My Dear William,—You have had your troubles, and we ours. This day three weeks your mother received a letter from Mr. Newton, which she has not yet answered, nor is likely

to answer hereafter. It gave us both much concern, but her more than me; I suppose because my mind being necessarily occupied in my work, I had not so much leisure to browse upon the wormwood that it contained. The purport of it is a direct accusation of me, and of her an accusation implied, that we have both deviated into forbidden paths, and lead a life unbecoming the gospel; that many of my friends in London are grieved, and the simple people of Olney astonished; that he never so much doubted of my restoration to Christian privileges as now; in short, that I converse too much with people of the world, and find too much pleasure in doing so. He concludes with putting your mother in mind that there is still an intercourse between London and Olney; by which he means to insinuate that we cannot offend against the decorum that we are bound to observe, but the news of it will most certainly be conveyed to him. We do not at all doubt it; we never knew a lie hatched at Olney that waited long for a bearer; and though we do not wonder to find ourselves made the subjects of a false accusation in a place ever fruitful of such productions, we do and must wonder a little that he should listen to them with so much credulity. I say this because, if he had heard only the truth, or had believed no more than the truth, he would not, I think, have found either me censurable or your mother. And that *she* should be suspected of irregularities is the more wonder (for wonderful it would be at any rate), because she sent him, not long before, a letter conceived in such strains of piety and spirituality as ought to have convinced him that she at least was no wanderer. But what is the fact, and how do we spend our [time] in reality? What are the deeds for which we have been represented as thus criminal? Our present course of life differs in nothing from that which we have both held these thirteen years, except that, after great civilities shown us, and many advances made on the part of the Throcks, we visit them; that we visit also at Gayhurst; that we have frequently taken airings with my cousin in her carriage; and that I have sometimes taken a walk with her on a Sunday evening, and sometimes by myself —which, however, your mother has never done. These are

the only novelties in our practice; and if by these procedures, so inoffensive in themselves, we yet give offence, offence must needs be given. God and our own consciences acquit us, and we acknowledge no other judges.

The two families with whom we have kicked up this astonishing intercourse are as harmless in their conversation and manners as can be found anywhere. And as to my poor cousin, the only crime that she is guilty of against the people of Olney is, that she has fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and administered comfort to the sick—except, indeed, that by her great kindness she has given us a little lift in point of condition and circumstances, and has thereby excited envy in some who have not the knack of rejoicing in the prosperity of others. And this I take to be the root of the matter.

My dear William, I do not know that I should have teased your nerves and spirits with this disagreeable theme, had not Mr. Newton talked of applying to you for particulars. He would have done it, he says, when he saw you last, but had not time. You are now qualified to inform him as minutely as we ourselves could, of all our enormities! Adieu!—Our sincerest love to yourself and yours.

COWPER TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN.

THANKS FOR A GIFT.

My Dear William,—The fish happening to swim uppermost in my mind, I give it the precedence, and begin with returning our thanks for it, not forgetting the circumstance of free carriage. Upon the whole, I think this a handsomer way of acknowledging a present than to tuck it into a postscript.

Few people have the art of being agreeable when they talk of themselves; if you are not weary, therefore, by this time, you pay me a high compliment.

I daresay Miss S—— was much diverted with the conjecture of her friends. The true key to the pleasure she found at Olney was plain enough to be seen, but they chose to over-

look it. She brought with her a disposition to be pleased, which whoever does is sure to find a visit agreeable, because they make it so.—Yours.

COWPER TO MRS. THROCKMORTON.

PLAYFUL LETTER.

THE LODGE, *May* 10, 1790.

MY DEAR MRS. FROG,—You have by this time, I presume, heard from the Doctor, whom I desired to present to you our best affections, and to tell you that we are well. He sent an urchin (I do not mean a hedgehog, commonly called an urchin in old times, but a boy, commonly so called at present), expecting that he would find you at Bucklands, whither he supposed you gone on Thursday. He sent him charged with divers articles, and among others with letters, or at least with a letter; which I mention, that if the boy should be lost, together with his despatches, past all possibility of recovery, you may yet know that the Doctor stands acquitted of not writing. That he is utterly lost (that is to say, the boy, for the Doctor being the last antecedent, as the grammarians say, you might otherwise suppose that he was intended) is the more probable, because he was never four miles from his home before, having only travelled at the side of a plough-team; and when the Doctor gave him his direction to Bucklands, he asked, very naturally, if that place was in England. So what has become of him Heaven knows!

I do not know that any adventures have presented themselves since your departure worth mentioning, except that the rabbit that infested your wilderness has been shot for devouring your carnations; and that I myself have been in some danger of being devoured in like manner by a great dog, viz., Pearson's. But I wrote him a letter on Friday (I mean a letter to Pearson, not to his dog, which I mention to prevent mistakes—for the said last antecedent might occasion them in this place also), informing him that unless he tied up his great mastiff in the day-time, I would send him a worse thing, commonly called and known by the name of an attorney. When

I go forth to ramble in the fields, I do not sally like Don Quixote, with a purpose of encountering monsters, if any such can be found; but am a peaceable and poor gentleman, and a poet, who mean nobody any harm—the fox-hunters and the two universities of this land excepted.

I cannot learn from any creature whether the Turnpike Bill is alive or dead—so ignorant am I, and by such ignoramuses surrounded. But if I know little else, this at least I know, that I love you and Mr. Frog, that I long for your return, and that I am, with Mrs. Unwin's best affections, ever yours.

COWPER TO WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ.

ON A FRIEND'S RECOVERY FROM ILLNESS.

WESTON, *June* 4, 1792.

ALL'S well; which words I place as conspicuously as possible, and prefix them to my letter, to save you the pain, my friend and brother, of a moment's anxious speculation. Poor Mary proceeds in her amendment still, and improves, I think, even at a swifter rate than when you left her. The stronger she grows the faster she gathers strength, which is perhaps the natural course of recovery. She walked so well this morning, that she told me at my first visit she had entirely forgot her illness; and she spoke so distinctly, and had so much of her usual countenance, that, had it been possible, she would have made me forget it too.

Returned from my walk, blown to tatters—found two dear things in the study, your letter and my Mary! She is bravely well, and your beloved epistle does us both good. I found your kind pencil note in my song-book, as soon as I came down on the morning of your departure; and Mary was vexed to the heart, that the simpletons who watched her supposed her asleep, when she was not; for she learned soon after you were gone, that you would have peeped at her, had you known her to have been awake. I perhaps might have had a peep too, and therefore was as vexed as she; but if it please God, we shall make ourselves large amends for all lost peeps by-and-by at Eartham.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

PLAYFUL LETTER.

THE LODGE, *March* 31, 1788.

MY DEAREST COUSIN,—Mrs. Throckmorton has promised to write to me. I beg that as often as you shall see her you will give her a smart pinch, and say, "Have you written to my cousin?" I build all my hopes of her performance on this expedient; and for so doing these my letters, not patent, shall be your sufficient warrant. You are thus to give her the question till she shall answer "Yes."

I have written one more song, and sent it. It is called the Morning Dream, and may be sung to the tune of Tweedside, or any other tune that will suit it, for I am not nice on that subject. I would have copied it for you, had I not almost filled my sheet without it; but now, my dear, you must stay till the sweet sirens of London shall bring it to you; or if that happy day should never arrive, I hereby acknowledge myself your debtor to that amount. I shall now probably cease to sing of tortured negroes, a theme which never pleased me, but which, in the hope of doing them some little service, I was not unwilling to handle.

If anything could have raised Miss More to a higher place in my opinion than she possessed before, it could only be your information that, after all, she, and not Mr. Wilberforce, is author of that volume. How comes it to pass that she, being a woman, writes with a force, and energy, and a correctness, hitherto arrogated by the men, and not very frequently displayed even by the men themselves!—Adieu.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

PLAYFUL LETTER.

THE LODGE, *September* 1788.

MY DEAREST COZ,—Beau seems to have objections against my writing to you this morning that are not to be overruled. *He will be in my lap*, licking my face, and nibbling the end of

my pen. Perhaps he means to say, I beg you will give my love to her—which I therefore send you accordingly. There cannot be, this hindrance excepted, a situation more favourable to the business I have in hand than mine at this moment. Here is no noise, *save* (as the poets always express it) that of the birds hopping on their perches and playing with their wires, while the sun, glimmering through the elm opposite the window, falls on my desk with all the softness of moonshine. There is not a cloud in the sky, nor a leaf that moves; so that over and above the enjoyment of the purest calm, I feel a well-warranted expectation that such as the day is, it will be to its end. This is the month in which such weather is to be expected, and which is therefore welcome to me beyond all others, October excepted, which promises to bring you hither. At your coming you will probably find us, and us only; or, to speak more properly, *uxx*. The Frogs, as I told you, hop into Norfolk soon, on a visit to Lord Petre, who, besides his palace in Essex, has another in that county. All the brothers are now at the Hall, *save* the physician, who is employed in prescribing medicine to the Welsh at Cardiff. There lives he with *madame son épouse*, with an income of three hundred pounds a year—all happiness and contentment. The mother is also here; and here is also our uncle Gifford—a man whom, if you know, you must love; and if you do not, I wish you did. But he goes this morning, and I expect every minute to see him pass my window. In volubility, variety, and earnestness of expression, he very much resembles your father, and in the sweetness of his temper too; so that though he be but a passenger, or rather a bird of passage—for his head-quarters are in France, and he only flits occasionally to England—he has much engaged my affections. I walked with him yesterday on a visit to an oak on the borders of Yardley Chase—an oak which I often visit, and which is one of the wonders that I show to all who come this way, and have never seen it. I tell them all that it is a thousand years old, verily believing it to be so, though I do not know it. A mile beyond this oak stands another, which has from time immemorial been known by the name of Judith, and is said to have been an oak when

my namesake the Conqueror first came hither. And besides all this, there is a good coach-way to them both, and I design that you shall see them too.

A day or two before the arrival of your last letter, we were agreeably surprised by that of a hamper, stuffed with various articles in the grocery way, corresponding exactly with a bill of parcels which accompanied them. Though we had received no advice of the same, we were not at all at a loss for the sender, and hereby, my dear, make you our very best acknowledgments for your kind present. Having had company this summer, and being also obliged now and then to feed the Frogs, our stock of hams and tongues is not at present much—one of the former and two of the latter making up our whole store in that way.

I have as yet no news from the Chancellor. It is possible that none I may have till he can send me good; for to me it seems that, after having expressed for me so much warmth of friendship still subsisting, he has laid himself under pretty strong obligations to do something for me, if anything can be done. But though in my time my rest has been broken by many things, it never was yet by the desire of riches, or the dread of poverty. At the same time I have no objection to all that he can do for me, be it ever so much.

I am going this morning with the Dowager Frog to Chicheley, on a visit to the Chesters, which obliges me to shorten my scribble somewhat. Unless I finish my letter first, you will not get it by this post. Therefore farewell, my dear: may God keep thee, and give us a joyful meeting; so pray we both. Amen.—Ever thine.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

PLAYFUL LETTER.

THE LODGE, *December* 18, 1789.

MY DEAREST COUSIN,—Unable to resist the temptation of a basket, I take the opportunity that it affords to send you a hasty and short scribblement, though at an undue hour; for I write after breakfast, having overslept my usual time of rising.

Homer will pardon me a trespass so seldom committed, and by which he will be but little a loser.

In the first place, I thank thee heartily, that with the patience and the perseverance of an angler, in ponds *where fish are*, thou hast at length contrived to hook that great gudgeon mentioned in thy last. I do not think, at the same time, that thou wast guilty of any flattery in thy management of the matter; for to tell such a man that the absence of his name from my list of subscribers would have been a dishonour to my book, considering especially what book it is, was telling him the truth. And now I will speak a proud word! He will be glad when he gets the book that he did subscribe to it! and this proud word I speak almost as much with a view to thy encouragement as to gratify my own vanity and self-complacence. Authors are not often good judges of themselves; but thou must know that I am an exception.

Again I thank thee for wine—for two dozen of excellent Madeira, not a bottle of which was broken by the way. Impatient to taste it, though it was hardly allowing it a fair trial, I opened a bottle of it last night, and found it very superior to my last stock of that commodity, which I doubt not had been kept too long. Thanks also for newspapers, which I forgot like a beast to acknowledge in my last!

I sincerely rejoice with thee that thou hast succeeded in procuring a midshipmanship (there's a word for you!) for the poor young man in question. May he live to command where he now serves!

We should sooner have had a daily post, could the people of Olney have settled the affair among themselves. Better now than never. I must not forget to beg that you make my best compliments to the lady, whoever she is, to whom I am indebted for a subscription so handsomely given.

Our poor neighbours have both been indisposed; Mrs. Frog with a terrible cold, from which she is just recovered after a fortnight's illness; and Mr. Frog with his first fit of the gout, which seized him about a week since by the foot, and which confines him still.

As to ourselves, we are much *in statu quo*, except that Mrs.

U. has a slight nervous fever, accompanied with headaches, which she had not when you were here. She drinks lemonade, and finds it her best remedy.

"Received from my master, on account-current with Lady Hesketh, the sum of—one kiss on my forehead.—Witness my paw, BEAU + his mark."

Mrs. U. sends her affectionate compliments.

COWPER TO SAMUEL ROSE, ESQ.

PLAYFUL LETTER.

WESTON, *October* 4, 1789.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—The hamper is come, and come safe; and the contents I can affirm on my own knowledge are excellent. It chanced that another hamper and box came by the same conveyance, all which I unpacked and expounded in the hall; my cousin sitting meantime on the stairs, spectatress of the business. We diverted ourselves with imagining the manner in which Homer would have described the scene. Detailed in his circumstantial way, it would have furnished materials for a paragraph of considerable length in an Odyssey.

> **The straw-stuffed hamper with his ruthless steel**
> **He opened, cutting sheer th' inserted cords,**
> **Which bound the lid and lip secure. Forth came**
> **The rustling package first, bright straw of wheat,**
> **Or oats, or barley; next a bottle green,**
> **Throat-full, clear spirits the contents, distilled**
> **Drop after drop odorous, by the art**
> **Of the fair mother of his friend—the Rose.**

And so on. I should rejoice to be the hero of such a tale in the hands of Homer.

You will remember, I trust, that when the state of your health or spirits calls for rural walks and fresh air, you have always a retreat at Weston.

We are all well. All love you, down to the very dog; and shall be glad to hear that you have exchanged languor for alacrity, and the debility that you mention for indefatigable vigour.

Mr. Throckmorton has made me a handsome present—Villoison's edition of the Iliad, elegantly bound by Edwards. If I live long enough, by the contributions of my friends I shall once more be possessed of a library.—Adieu.

COWPER TO MRS. BODHAM.

WESTON-UNDERWOOD, *July* 7, 1791.

MY DEAREST COUSIN,—Most true it is, however strange, that on the twenty-fifth of last month I wrote you a long letter, and verily thought I had sent it. But opening my desk the day before yesterday, there I found it. Such a memory have I!—a good one never, but at present worse than usual, my head being filled with the cares of publication and the bargain that I am making with my bookseller.

I am sorry that through this forgetfulness of mine you were disappointed, otherwise should not at all regret that my letter never reached you; for it consisted principally of such reasons as I could muster to induce you to consent to a favourite measure to which you have consented without them. Your kindness, and self-denying disinterestedness on this occasion have endeared you to us all, if possible, still the more, and are truly worthy of the Rose that used to sit smiling on my knee, I will not say how many years ago.

Make no apologies, my dear, that thou dost not write more frequently. Write when thou canst, and I shall be satisfied. I am sensible, as I believe I have already told you, that there is an awkwardness in writing to those with whom we have hardly ever conversed; in consideration of which I feel myself not at all inclined either to wonder at or to blame your silence. At the same time be it known to you that you must not take encouragement, from this my great moderation, to write less frequently than you might, lest, disuse increasing the labour, you should at last write not at all.

That I should visit Norfolk at present is not possible; I have heretofore pleaded my engagement to Homer as the reason; and a reason it was, while it subsisted, that was

absolutely insurmountable. But there are still other impediments, which it would neither be pleasant to me to relate nor to you to know, and which could not well be comprised in a letter. Let it suffice for me to say, that could they be imparted, you would admit the force of them. It shall be our mutual consolation, that if we cannot meet at Mattishall, at least we may meet at Weston, and that we shall meet here with double satisfaction, being now so numerous.

Your sister is well; Kitty I think better than when she came; and Johnny ails nothing, except that if he eat a little more supper than usual he is apt to be riotous in his sleep. We have an excellent physician at Northampton, whom our dear Catharine wishes to consult; and I have recommended it to Johnny to consult him at the same time. His nocturnal ailment is, I daresay, within the reach of medical advice, and because it may happen some time or other to be very hurtful to him, I heartily wish him cured of it. Light suppers and early rising perhaps might alone be sufficient;—but the latter is a difficulty that threatens not to be easily surmounted.

We are all of one mind respecting you, therefore I send the love of all, though I shall see none of the party till breakfast calls us together. Great preparation is making in the empty house. The spiders have no rest, and hardly a web is to be seen, where lately there were thousands.

I am, my dearest cousin, with best respects to Mr. Bodham, most affectionately yours.

CHARLOTTE BRONTE TO A FRIEND.

December 28.

I FEEL as if it were almost a farce to sit down and write to you now, with nothing to say worth listening to; and, indeed, if it were not for two reasons, I should put off the business at least a fortnight hence. The first reason is, I want another letter from you, for your letters are interesting—they have something in them, some results of experience and observation; *one* receives them with pleasure, and reads them with relish;

and these letters I cannot expect to get, unless I reply to them. I wish the correspondence could be managed so as to be all on one side! The second reason is derived from a remark in your last, that you felt lonely, something as I was at Brussels, and that consequently you had a peculiar desire to hear from old acquaintance. I can understand and sympathize with this. I remember the shortest note was a treat to me, when I was at the above-named place; therefore I write. I have also a third reason: it is a haunting terror lest you should imagine I forget you,—that my regard cools with absence. It is not in my nature to forget your nature; though, I daresay, I should spit fire and explode sometimes if we lived together continually; and you, too, would get angry, and then we should get reconciled and jog on as before.—Yours truly.

PART V.

Letters to Relations.

LORD JEFFREY TO A GRANDCHILD,

ON HER BIRTHDAY.

CRAIGCROOK, *June* 21, 1847.

A HIGH day! and a holiday; the longest and the brightest of the year! the very middle day of the summer, and the very day when Maggie first opened her sweet eyes on the light! Bless you ever, my darling, and bonny bairn. You have now blossomed beside us for six pleasant years, and been all that time the light of our eyes and the love of our hearts,—at first the cause of some tender fears, from your weakness and delicacy, —then of some little provocation, from your too great love, as we thought, of your own will and amusement,—but now only of love and admiration, for your gentle obedience to your parents, and your sweet yielding to the wishes of your younger sister and brother. God bless and keep you then for ever, my delightful and ever improving child, and make you not only gay and happy, as an angel without sin and sorrow, but meek and mild, like that heavenly Child who was once sent down to earth for our example.

Well, the sun is shining brightly on our towers and trees, and the great bonfire is all piled up and ready to be lighted, when we come out after drinking your health at dinner; and we have got a great blue and yellow flag hung out on the tower,

waving proudly in the wind, and telling all the country around that this is a day of rejoicing and thanksgiving, and wishes of happiness, with all who live under its shadow. And the servants are all to have a fine dinner, and wine and whisky to drink to your health, and all the young Christies (that is the new gardener's children) will be taught to repeat your name with blessings; and, when they are drawn up round the bonfire, will wonder a little, I daresay, what sort of a creature this Miss Maggie can be, that we are making all this fuss about! and so you must take care, when you come, to be good enough and pretty enough, to make them understand why we all so love and honour you.

Frankie and Tarley have been talking a great deal about you this morning already, and Granny is going to take them and Maggie Rutherfurd and her brother down to the sea at Cramond, that they may tell the fishes and the distant shores what a happy and a hopeful day it is to them, and to us all. And so bless you again, my sweet one, for this and all future years. Think kindly of one who thinks always of you; and believe, that of all who love you, there is none who has loved you better, or longer, or more constantly, than your loving Grandpa.

LORD JEFFREY TO A GRANDCHILD.

CRAIGCROOK, *June* 20, 1843.

MY SONSY NANCY!—I love you very much, and think very often of your dimples, and your pimples, and your funny little plays, and all your pretty ways: and I send you my blessing, and wish I were kissing your sweet, rosy lips, or your fat finger tips; and that you were here, so that I could hear your stammering words from a mouthful of curds; and a great purple tongue (as broad as it's long); and see your round eyes, open wide with surprise, and your wondering look, to find yourself at Craigcrook. To-morrow is Maggie's *birthday*, and we have built up a great bonfire in honour of it; and Maggie Rutherfurd (do you remember her at all?) is coming out to dance round it,—and all the servants are to drink her health, and wish her

many happy days with you and Frankie,—and all the mammys and pappys, whether grand or not grand. We are very glad to hear that she and you love each other so well, and are happy in making each other happy; and that you do not forget dear Tarley or Frankie when they are out of sight, nor Granny either,—or even old Granny pa, who is in most danger of being forgotten, he thinks. We have had showery weather here, but the garden is full of flowers; and Frankie has a new wheel-barrow, and does a great deal of work, and *some mischief* now and then. All the dogs are very well; and Foxey is mine, and Froggy is Tarley's, and Frankie has taken up with great white Neddy,—so that nothing is left for Granny but old barking Jacky and Dover when the carriage comes. The donkey sends his compliments to you, and maintains that you are a cousin of his! or a near relation, at all events. He wishes, too, that you and Maggie would come; for he thinks that you will not be so heavy on his back as Tarley and Maggie Rutherfurd, who now ride him without mercy. This is Sunday, and Ali is at church—Granny and I taking care of Frankie till she comes back, and he is now hammering very busily at a corner of the carpet, which he says does not lie flat. He is very good, and really too pretty for a boy, though I think his two eye-brows are growing into one,—stretching and meeting each other above his nose! But he has not near so many *freckles* as Tarley, who has a very fine crop of them, which she and I encourage as much as we can. I hope you and Maggie will lay in a stock of them, as I think no little girl can be pretty without them in summer. Our pea-hens are suspected of having young families in some hidden place, for though they pay us short visits now and then, we see them but seldom, and always alone. If you and Maggie were here with your sharp eyes, we think you might find out their secret, and introduce us to a nice new family of young peas. The old papa cock, in the meantime, says he knows nothing about them, and does not care a farthing! We envy you your young peas of another kind, for we have none yet, nor any asparagus either, and hope you will bring some down to us in your lap. Tarley sends her *love,* and I send mine to you all, though I shall think most of

Maggie to-morrow morning, and of you when your birth morning comes. When is that, do you know? It is never dark now here, and we might all go to bed without candles. And so bless you ever and ever, my dear dimply pussie.—Your very loving Grandpa.

LETTER OF REMONSTRANCE FROM A FATHER TO HIS SON,

DURING HIS APPRENTICESHIP.

ANSTRUTHER, *December* 30, 1793.

MY DEAR WILLIAM,—I wrote you last week, and have none of yours now to reply to; but have had a letter to which I am obliged to reply, and a very painful task it was to me to do so. I do not mean either to rail on or to abuse you, but desire, with soberness and affection, to expostulate with you. The letter I mention was from Mr. John Young, who regrets the necessity he was under of informing me of your inattention to your business; of your treating his entreaties and orders with neglect and contempt; of your absenting yourself whole days, even weeks, without any reason or apology; and that as he cannot trust to your attendance, he can only reckon you as a supernumerary hand; and as no application is given by you, it is not possible you can reap any benefit. Now, my dear Willie, the remedy is only with yourself; and I really think you may have resolution enough to accomplish it. The consideration of your friends, and your own interest, I should think reasons sufficiently strong to urge you to it. You are Mr. Young's legal apprentice. The penalty of your failure I am liable to pay. Every day you absent yourself, you are liable to serve two for it at the end of your apprenticeship. After all that has happened, I still hope you may do well. As you tender the authority and regard of a father, the affection of your mother,—the peace and comfort of both parents, brothers, sisters, and relations,—as you regard your future prosperity in life, and the authority of God, who commands obedience and respect to earthly masters, I beseech you, my dear son, to leave

off levity and negligence, and to attend regularly on your master's business. Your whole time is his during your apprenticeship. Never absent yourself a day, or any part of it, and make amends for your former neglect by a constant attendance. Be very careful to study your master's temper. Receive his orders with respect, and execute them with diligence. None come through life without difficulties. I have therefore to beseech you to have courage to bear what you may meet with. The day will come, I hope, that you will consider your present difficulties as having been a blessing. Though you may in some cases think yourself hardly used, it is your duty to submit. Great, very great are the advantages to a young man of being constantly employed. May God be with you and bless you; and if my counsel to you at this time has His blessing, it will give you and me grounds of thankfulness. —I am, your affectionate father.

FROM REV. J. HALDANE STEWART, TO A SON,

ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

My very Dear ——, Although your dear brother, as well as myself, are deprived of the pleasure of giving you our personal congratulations, we are not unmindful that this is your birthday; nor have I ceased to give thanks to the Lord for his goodness to you thus far, and to entreat that you may daily grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Birthdays are sacred opportunities; are seasons for calling to remembrance the Lord's manifold mercies, our own shortcomings, our failures in our love and devotedness to our Saviour; times also when, in dependence upon the Lord, we may commence anew in our Christian course, profit by past mistakes, and form resolutions for the time to come. I trust, my dear ——, that every returning birthday convinces you more and more deeply that there is but one path to happiness, —that to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace—that we were sent into this world

for a higher purpose than to be amused—that we are not our own, that we are bought with a price, and that price the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ—that we should glorify God in our bodies and our spirits, which are his. I have found by long experience, that the more steadily I have been enabled to pursue that path, the more happy I have been. It is my very affectionate love for you that leads me to bring this to your remembrance, not doubting but that, every year that we both are spared, I shall have still greater cause for praise and thanksgiving for you. Entreating for you every blessing, with kindest love to all with you, believe me to remain, very dear——, your very affectionate father.

A STUDENT TO HIS MOTHER.

My Dear Mother,—Though I am now sitting with my back towards you, yet I love you none the less; and what is quite as strange, I can see you just as plainly as if I stood peeping in upon you. I can see you all, just as you sit round the family table. Tell me if I do not see you. There is my mother on the right of the table, with her knitting, and a book open before her; and anon she glances her eyes from the work on paper to that on her needles; now counts the stitches, and then puts her eye on the book, and starts off for another round. There is Mary looking wise, and sewing with all her might, now and then stopping to give Sarah and Louisa a lift in getting their lessons, and trying to initiate them in the mysteries of geography. She is on the left of the table. There, in the background, is silent Joseph, with his slate, now making a mark, and then biting his lip, and scratching his head, to see if the algebraic expression may have hidden in either of these places. George is in the kitchen, tinkering his skates, or contriving a trap for that old offender of a rat, whose cunning has so long brought mortification upon all his boastings. I can now hear his hammer and his whistle,—that peculiar, searching kind of whistle, which always indicates a puzzled state of the brain. Little William and Henry are

snug in bed, and if you just open their bed-room door, you will barely hear them breathe. And now my mother has stopped, and is absent and thoughtful, and my heart tells me she is thinking of her only absent child. Who can he be? Will you doubt any more that I have studied magic, and can see with my back turned to you, and many a hill and valley between us?

You have been even kinder than I expected, or you promised. I did not expect to hear from you till to-morrow, at the earliest. But as I was walking to-day, one of my fellow-students cries, "A parcel at the coach-office!" and away I went as fast as the dignity of academy habit would allow me. The parcel I seized, and muffled it under my cloak, though it made my arm ache; and, with as much speed as my "condition" would permit me, I reached my room. Out came my knife, and forgetting all your good advice about "strings and payments," the said parcel quickly owned me victor, and opened its very heart to me; and it had a warm heart too, for there were the stockings (they are now on my feet—*i.e.*, one pair), and there were the flannels, and the braces, and the gloves, and the pin-cushion from Louisa, and the needle-book from Sarah, and the paper from Mary, and the letters I love from all of you. I spread open my treasures, and both my heart and feet danced for joy, while my hands actually rubbed each other out of sympathy. Thanks to you all, for bundle, and letters, and love. One corner of my eye is moistened while I say, "Thank ye all, good folks." I must not forget to mention the apples, "the six apples, one from each;" and the beautiful little loaf of cake. I should not dare to call it little, if it had not brought the name from you. The apples I have smelled of, and the cake I have just nibbled a little, and pronounced it to be "in the finest taste."

Now, a word about your letters. I cannot say much, for I have only read my mother's three times, and Mary's twice. Those parts which relate to my own acts and doings greatly edify me. Right glad to find that the spectacles fitted my mother's eyes so well. You wondered how I hit it. Why, have I not been told from my very babyhood, "You have your

mother's eyes!" And what is plainer than that—if I have her eyes, I can pick out glasses that will fit them? I am glad, too, that the new book is a favourite. I shall have to depend on you to read for me; for here I read nothing but my Lexicon, and, peradventure, dip into mathematics. Joseph's knife shall be forthcoming, and the orders of William and Henry shall be honoured, if the apothecary has the pigments. "George is delighted with his new chaise,"—a cheering item: for my thumb has retired into his cot, and growled and ached ever since, and even now, ever and anon, gives me a twinge, by way of recalling the feat of building the chaise. And you really think the pigs have profited by my labours, and that, though they have forgotten me, they like the sty! If they do well, I shall be paid next season, whether they are grateful or not. Old Charley should be kept warm. He has carried us too many miles to be neglected now. I am sorry I had not his condition more in mind when at home. Poor fellow, I enjoyed his aid, and helped to make him grow old. And old Rover, let him have his new kennel warm; and if he thinks as much of me as to "go to my room" after me, let him have my old wrapper. One thing more: tell Sukey—though I mention her after horses and dogs, it is not out of any want of respect—I will wear the mittens which she knit and sent; and, in return, though I cannot approve, will send as much, at least, of "real Scotch," as will fill her box.

I am warm, well, and comfortable: we all study something, and dull fellows like me have to confess that we study hard. We have no genius to help us.

Your gentle hint, dear mother, about leaving my Bible at home was kind; but it will relieve you to know that I left it designedly, and in its place took my dear father's from the upper shelf in our little library-room; and what is more, I read it every day.

I have got it framed, and there it hangs—the picture of my father! I never look up without seeing it, and I never see it without thinking that my mother is a widow, and that I am her eldest son. What more I think I will not be fool enough to say: you will imagine it better than I can say it.

I need not say, write, write: for I know that some of you will, at the end of three weeks. Best love to all, and much too. I shall tell you of my method of economy in my next.—Your affectionate son, &c.

CHARLOTTE BRONTE, ON THE DEATH OF HER SISTER.

Tuesday.

I SHOULD have written to you before, if I had had one word of hope to say; but I have not. She grows daily weaker. The physician's opinion was expressed too obscurely to be of use. He sent some medicine, which she would not take. Moments so dark as these I have never known. I pray for God's support to us all. Hitherto he has granted it.

December 21, 1848.

EMILY suffers no more from pain or weakness now. She never will suffer more in this world. She is gone, after a hard, short conflict. She died on *Tuesday*,—the very day I wrote to you. I thought it very possible she might be with us still for weeks; and a few hours afterwards she was in eternity. Yes; there is no Emily in time or on earth now. Yesterday we put her poor, wasted, mortal frame quietly under the church pavement. We are very calm at present. Why should we be otherwise? The anguish of seeing her suffer is over; the spectacle of the pains of death is gone by; the funeral day is past. We feel she is at peace. No need now to tremble for the hard frost and the keen wind. Emily does not feel them. She died in a time of promise. We saw her taken from life in its prime. But it is God's will, and the place where she is gone is better than that she has left.

God has sustained me, in a way that I marvel at, through such agony as I had not conceived. I now look at Anne, and wish she were well and strong; but she is neither—nor is papa. Could you now come to us for a few days? I would not ask you to stay long. Write and tell me if you could come

next week, and by what train. I would try to send a gig for you to Keighley. You will, I trust, find us tranquil. Try to come. I never so much needed the consolation of a friend's presence. Pleasure, of course, there would be none for you in the visit, except what your kind heart would teach you to find in doing good to others.—Yours truly.

REV. JOHN NEWTON TO A FRIEND,

WHOSE BOY HAD MET WITH AN ACCIDENT.

September 4, 1777.

My Dear Sir,—Poor little boy! it is mercy indeed that he recovered from such a formidable hurt. The Lord wounded, and the Lord healed. I ascribe with you, what the world calls accident, to Him, and believe, that without his permission, for wise and good ends, a child can no more pull a bowl of boiling water on itself, than it could pull the moon out of its orbit. And why does he permit such things? One reason or two is sufficient for us: it is to remind us of the uncertainty of life and all creature-comforts; to make us afraid of cleaving too closely to pretty toys, which are so precarious, that often while we look at them they vanish; and to lead us to a more entire dependence upon Himself; that we might never judge ourselves or our concerns safe from outward appearances only, but that the Lord is our keeper, and were not his eye upon us a thousand dangers and painful changes, which we can neither foresee nor prevent, are lurking about us at every step, ready to break in upon us every hour. Men are but children of a larger growth. How many are labouring and planning in the pursuit of things, the event of which, if they obtain them, will be but like pulling scalding water upon their own heads! They *must* have the bowl by all means, but they are not aware what is in it till they feel it.—I am, &c.

PART VI.

Apologies for not Writing.

LORD JEFFREY TO MR. J. JEFFREY.

EDINBURGH, 20*th May* 1796.

MY DEAR JOHN,—I wrote you in the beginning of this month, and promised, and meant, to have written you again within a shorter time than I have already permitted to pass. I have been ever since, indeed, most abominably idle, and neglected every kind of duty and engagement. I have a way, too, of replying to my conscience, when it importunes me on your behalf, that I have already done a great deal more than I was bound to do, and that if I do neglect you for a little while, it is but a fair and slight return for the many omissions of which you have already been guilty. If you were to make it an excuse that you have nothing to say, it would not be true, for I have asked you a hundred questions which you have never yet answered; and it would, besides, be an excuse which I have never allowed to seduce me, though it be continually present to me, and does very well to palliate the stupidity of my letters, though I will not let it prevent me from writing them.

It is now just about a year since you visited us here, though it seems to me, upon recollection, the shortest year that I ever spent. If they go on shortening as they multiply upon us, we shall grow old in such a hurry that our schemes of life will be left unfinished, and we shall scarcely know how we have lived when we are summoned to die. For my part, I have such a

deal of business upon my hands, that I must be allowed a good long day to finish it in. I have to visit one-half at least of the nations of the earth, and gather together one-half of its learning. Then I have to seek me out some angelic partner, and engender a dozen or two of children, and educate them after our own image. And, above all, and what should have come first, I have to acquire a comfortable fortune, and a pretty independence of all men and all events. Of this I have not yet seen the beginning, and am better pleased, indeed, to imagine the end, than to investigate how I am likely to get at it.

Write me a long account of your situation, your prospects, metamorphoses, and meditations; and, above all, if you must become weary in the cause of writing to me, do not at least let me see it so plainly, nor lengthen out a languid page with laborious sentences, &c.

LORD JEFFREY TO MR. R. MOREHEAD.

EDINBURGH, *6th August* 1798.

WELL, I owe you a letter, I suppose, Bobby. And what then? That may be many an honest man's case as well as mine; and there may be apologies, I suppose, and whys and wherefores, of which you know nothing, nor I neither. I will make you no apology. I have forgiven you ten letters in my time, and wrote on without calculating the amount of my debt, &c. Why do I write you this, Bobby? or why, in my present humour, do I write you at all? Principally, I believe, to tell you that I expect very soon to see you, and to tell you that there is no person whom I think of seeing with greater pleasure, or towards whom it would be more unjust to suspect me of forgetfulness or unkindness.

LORD JEFFREY TO MRS. RUTHERFURD.

LONDON, 13 CLARGES STREET, *1st April* 1832.

YOU must not scold, but pity me, my dear Sophia. You do not believe that I am in any danger of forgetting you, or (though I do not write often to you) that I am indifferent

about being remembered. You know better things, and are yourself of better principles, than to nourish such unworthy suspicions. You know how I am hurried and worried, and how little time I have to do anything I like. And then I have *occasion* to write to Cockburn almost every day, and naturally take occasion to pour out all my gossip to him, of which I take it for granted that he retails as much as there is any demand for in your market. I do not believe, indeed, that the details of an insignificant existence were ever so fully recorded. If they had only been addressed to *you*, they might have come nearer the standard of Swift's Journal to Stella. But being noted down for the satisfaction of a matter-of-fact male creature, I am afraid they will read rather like the *precis* of a daily paper; though, after all, it is the want of any good contemporary daily paper that makes Swift's Journal so interesting.

LORD JEFFREY TO MRS. RUTHERFURD.

CRAIGCROOK, *14th July* 1839.

MY SWEET, GENTLE, AND LONG-SUFFERING SOPHIA,—Your (just) resentment is terrible enough at a distance, but it would kill me at hand, and therefore I *must* mollify it, in some way or another, before you come down; for you know I could never live to see you "into terror turn your countenance, too severe to behold!" What, then, shall I say to appease you? What, but that I am a miserable sinner? and yet more miserable than sinning, for I am old and indolent, and yet forced to work like a young tiger, and obliged to walk to keep my stagnating blood in motion, till, with toil and *early rising*, I am overtaken with sleep in the afternoons, and have scarcely time and vigour for my necessary labours. "Ah, little think the gay licentious proud!" And then I have grown (and high time too) so conscious of my failings, and diffident of my powers of pleasing, and so possessed with the dread of your increased fastidiousness in that great scornful London, and of the *odiousness* of the comparisons to which I would subject myself, that, altogether and upon the whole, you see, it has

been as it were, or as you would say, impossible, or at least not easy, to answer your kind and entertaining letter with anything but kindness; which I thought might be despised, or not thought good enough for you, and so forth! And so you understand all about it, and *must* forgive me, whether you will or not, and pity me into the bargain, with that pity which melts the soul to love—and so we are friends again.

LORD JEFFREY TO MRS. E. CAYLEY.

CRAIGCROOK, *6th August* 1846.

MY DEAR EMMA,—It is unaccountable to myself why I have not answered your letter long ago. Can you explain this to me? I was thankful enough for it, I am sure, and, indeed, both touched and flattered by it, more than I shall now try to tell you; and I did mean to write immediately, only one grows old, and good for nothing, I fear; and so you must even be contented to love me a little as I am, and to know that I love you, and shall always, as long as there is any life left in the heart of this poor carcass.

JANE TAYLOR TO MISS M. H——E.

HASTINGS, *December* 10, 1816.

IF you knew the glow of pleasure and affection with which I take up my long-neglected pen, every suspicion of neglect which my silence may have occasioned would be dispelled. I know of few things that would give me greater pleasure than your taking a place at our new fireside; and as the best substitute for that unattainable pleasure, I do hope you will, as soon as compatible with your engagements, let me receive another of your interesting and ever-welcome epistles. . . .

COWPER TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON.

Aug. 16, 1789.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Mrs. Newton and you are both kind and just in believing that I do not love you less when I am long silent. Perhaps a friend of mine, who wishes me to have him

always in my thoughts, is never so effectually possessed of the accomplishment of that wish as when I have been long his debtor; for *then* I think of him not only every day, but day and night, and all day long. But I confess, at the same time, that my thoughts of you will be more pleasant to myself when I shall have exonerated my conscience by giving you the letter so long your due. Therefore, here it comes—little worth your having, but payment, such as it is, that you have a right to expect, and that is essential to my own tranquillity. . . .

The ladies are coming down, and breakfast is at hand. Should I throw aside my letter unfinished, it is not probable that I shall be able to send it by this opportunity. Therefore, that you may not wait longer for that for which you have waited too long already, I will only add, that I always love and value you both as much as you can possibly wish, and that I am, with Mrs. Unwin's affectionate remembrances, my dear friend, ever yours.

COWPER TO W. HAYLEY, ESQ.

WESTON, *April* 23, 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,—Better late than never, and better a little than none at all! Had I been at liberty to consult my inclinations, I would have answered your truly kind and affectionate letter immediately. But I am the busiest man alive; and when this epistle is despatched, you will be the only one of my correspondents to whom I shall not be indebted. While I write this, my poor Mary sits mute, which I cannot well bear, and which, together with want of time to write much, will have a curtailing effect on my epistle.

My only studying time is still given to Homer; not to correction and amendment of him (for that is all over), but to writing notes. Johnson has expressed a wish for some, that the unlearned may be a little illuminated concerning classical story and the mythology of the ancients; and his behaviour to me has been so liberal, that I can refuse him nothing. Poking into the old Greek commentators blinds me. But it is no matter: I am the more like Homer.—Ever yours, my dearest Hayley.

PART VII.

Remonstrances for not Writing.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

THE LODGE, *January* 30, 1788.

MY DEAREST COUSIN,—It is a fortnight since I heard from you—that is to say, a week longer than you have accustomed me to wait for a letter. I do not forget that you have recommended it to me, on occasions somewhat similar, to banish all anxiety, and to ascribe your silence only to the interruptions of company. Good advice, my dear, but not easily taken by a man circumstanced as I am. I have learned in the school of adversity,—a school from which I have no expectation that I shall ever be dismissed,—to apprehend the worst; and have ever found it the only course in which I can indulge myself without the least danger of incurring a disappointment. This kind of experience, continued through many years, has given me such an habitual bias to the gloomy side of everything, that I never have a moment's ease on any subject to which I am not indifferent. How then can I be easy, when I am left afloat upon a sea of endless conjectures, of which you furnish the occasion? Write, I beseech you, and do not forget that I am now a battered actor upon this turbulent stage; that what little vigour of mind I ever had, of the self-supporting kind I mean, has long since been broken; and that though I can bear nothing well, yet anything better than a state of ignorance concerning your welfare. I have spent hours in the night

leaning upon my elbow, and wondering what your silence means. I entreat you once more to put an end to these speculations, which cost me more animal spirits than I can spare If you cannot without great trouble to yourself,—which in your situation may very possibly be the case,—contrive opportunities of writing so frequently as usual, only say it, and I am content. I will wait, if you desire it, as long for every letter,—but then let them arrive at the period once fixed, exactly at the time, for my patience will not hold out an hour beyond it.

COWPER TO MRS. KING.

WESTON-UNDERWOOD, *January* 4, 1790.

MY DEAR MADAM,—Your long silence has occasioned me to have a thousand anxious thoughts about you. So long it has been, that whether I now write to a Mrs. King at present on earth or already in heaven, I know not. I have friends whose silence troubles me less, though I have known them longer; because, if I hear not from themselves, I yet learn from others that they are still living, and likely to live. But if your letters cease to bring me news of your welfare, from whom can I gain the desirable intelligence? The birds of the air will not bring it, and third person there is none between us by whom it might be conveyed. Nothing is plain to me on this subject, but that either you are dead, or very much indisposed; or, which would affect me with perhaps as deep a concern, though of a different kind, very much offended. The latter of these suppositions I think the least probable, conscious as I am of an habitual desire to offend nobody, especially a lady, and especially a lady to whom I have many obligations. But all the three solutions above-mentioned are very uncomfortable; and if you live, and can send me one that will cause me less pain than either of them, I conjure you, by the charity and benevolence which I know influence you upon all occasions, to communicate it without delay.

It is possible, notwithstanding appearances to the contrary, that you are not become perfectly indifferent to me, and to

what concerns me. I will therefore add a word or two on a subject which once interested you, and which is, for that reason, worthy to be mentioned, though truly for no other—meaning myself. I am well, and have been so (uneasiness on your account excepted), both in mind and body, ever since I wrote to you last. I have still the same employment: Homer in the morning, and Homer in the evening, as constant as the day goes round. In the spring I hope to send the Iliad and Odyssey to the press. So much for me and my occupations. Poor Mrs. Unwin has hitherto had but an unpleasant winter,—unpleasant as constant pain, either in her head or side, could make it. She joins me in affectionate compliments to yourself and Mr. King, and in earnest wishes that you will soon favour me with a line that shall relieve me from all my perplexities. —I am, dear madam, sincerely yours.

COWPER TO MRS. KING.

WESTON-UNDERWOOD, *May* 26, 1791.

MY DEAR MADAM,—It is high time that I should write, be it only to convince you that my regard for you will prompt me to it, even though I have not the pleasure of hearing from you. To say truth, we have both been very anxious about you, verily believing that nothing less than severe indisposition would have kept you so long silent. If this be the case, I beg that you will not think of returning me an answer; for though it would give us the greatest pleasure to hear from you, we should be sincerely sorry to purchase that pleasure at your expense, and can only wish for a line on condition that you are able to write one without increasing the pain with which I suppose you afflicted.

With these apprehensions about you, I should certainly have made this inquiry much sooner, would my daily attentions to what is going forward in the press have permitted. This engagement has now been almost of a year's standing, and I am not even now released from it; but I rejoice to be able to say that my release is at hand, for the last line of the

Odyssey will be printed this day. There remain the preface, the list of subscribers, and two or three odd matters besides, and then I shall be once more at liberty.

You have not, I think, forgotten, my dear madam, that you and Mr. King gave us a hope of seeing you this summer at Weston. In a fortnight we expect some relations of mine from Norfolk. What stay they will make with us is to us unknown at present; but I shall send you the earliest notice of their departure, in the hope that you will supply their place as soon as possible. Years are waning apace, and if we mean to cultivate and improve the intercourse we have begun, there is no time to be lost. Let us not have it to say, when we meet in another world, that we might, if we would, have known each other better in this.

It is so long since I wrote my last letter to you, that I cannot at all recollect the date of it; but I seem to remember telling you in it, that I had narrowly escaped the greatest of all my terrors—a nervous fever. To say that I escaped it is indeed saying too much, for I question if I am at any time entirely free from it; but I thank God that I escaped the degree of it with which, in January, I seemed to be threatened. At present I am in pretty good health, yet not quite so well, I think, as in former years at this season. Mrs. Unwin, I believe, is about as well as when she had the pleasure to see you at Weston.

Thus, my dear madam, I have said all that appears to me worth saying at present. I have told you how we fare ourselves, and that we are anxious to know how it fares with you. I will add nothing but Mrs. Unwin's best compliments, together with my own, to both our friends at Pertenhall, and I am, dear madam, affectionately yours.

PART VIII.

Affection—Love—Marriage.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

My Dearest Cousin,—I am glad that I always loved you as I did. It releases me from any occasion to suspect that my present affection for you is indebted for its existence to any selfish considerations. No, I am sure I love you disinterestedly, and for your own sake, because I never thought of you with any other sensations than those of the truest affection, even while I was under the influence of a persuasion that I should never hear from you again. But with my present feelings, superadded to those that I always had for you, I find it no easy matter to do justice to my sensations. I perceive myself in a state of mind similar to that of the traveller described in Pope's "Messiah," who, as he passes through a sandy desert, starts at the sudden and unexpected sound of a waterfall. You have placed me in a situation new to me, and in which I feel myself somewhat puzzled how I ought to behave. At the same time that I would not grieve you, by putting a check upon your bounty, I would be as careful not to abuse it as if I were a miser, and the question not about your money, but my own.

Although I do not suspect that a secret to you, my cousin, is any burden, yet having maturely considered that point since I wrote my last, I feel myself altogether disposed to release you from the injunction, to that effect, under which I laid you.

I have now made such a progress in my translation, that I need neither fear that I shall stop short of the end, or that any rider of Pegasus should overtake me. Therefore if at any time it should fall fairly in your way, or you should feel yourself invited to say I am so occupied, you have my poetship's free permission. Dr. Johnson read and recommended my first volume.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

November 30.

My Dearest Cousin,—Your kindness reduces me to a necessity (a pleasant one, indeed) of writing all my letters in the same terms: always thanks—thanks at the beginning, and thanks at the end. It is, however, I say, a pleasant employment, when those thanks are indeed the language of the heart: and I can truly add, that there is no person on earth whom I thank with so much affection as yourself. You insisted that I should give you my genuine opinion of the wine. By the way, it arrived without the least damage or fracture, and I finished the first bottle of it this very day. It is excellent, and though the wine which I had been used to drink was not bad, far preferable to that. The bottles will be in town on Saturday. I am enamoured of the desk and its contents before I see them. They will be most entirely welcome. A few years since I made Mrs. Unwin a present of a snuff-box—a silver one. The purchase was made in London by a friend. It is of a size and form that make it more fit for masculine than feminine use. She, therefore, with pleasure accepts the box which you have sent,—I should say with the greatest pleasure. And I, discarding the leathern trunk that I have used so long, shall succeed to the possession of hers. She says, "Tell Lady Hesketh that I truly love and honour her." Now, my cousin, you may depend upon it, as a most certain truth, that these words from her lips are not an empty sound. I never in my life heard her profess a regard for any one that she felt not. She is not addicted to the use of such language upon ordinary occasions; but when she speaks it, speaks from

the heart. She has baited me this many a day, even as a bear is baited, to send for Dr. Kerr. But, as I hinted to you upon a former occasion, I am as muleish as most men are, and have hitherto most gallantly refused. But what is to be done now?—If it were uncivil not to comply with the solicitations of one lady, to be unmoved by the solicitations of two would prove me to be a bear indeed. I will, therefore, summon him to consideration of said stomach and its ailments without delay, and you shall know the result.—I have read Goldsmith's "Traveller" and his "Deserted Village," and am highly pleased with them both, as well for the manner in which they are executed, as for their tendency and the lessons that they inculcate.

Mrs. Unwin said to me a few nights since, after supper, "I have two fine fowls in feeding, and just fit for use; I wonder whether I should send them to Lady Hesketh?" I replied, "Yes; by all means! and I will tell you a story that will at once convince you of the propriety of doing so. My brother was curate on a time to Mr. Fawkes of Orpington, in Kent: it was when I lived in the Temple. One morning as I was reading by the fireside, I heard a prodigious lumbering at the door. I opened it, and beheld a most rural figure, with very dirty boots, and a great-coat as dirty. Supposing that my great fame as a barrister had drawn upon me a client from some remote region, I desired him to walk in. He did so, and introduced himself to my acquaintance by telling me that he was the farmer with whom my brother lodged at Orpington. After this preliminary information, he unbuttoned his great-coat, and I observed a quantity of long feathers projected from an inside pocket. He thrust in his hand, and with great difficulty extracted a great fat capon. He then proceeded to lighten the other side of him, by dragging out just such another, and begged my acceptance of both. I sent them to a tavern, where they were dressed; and I with two or three friends, whom I invited to the feast, found them incomparably better than any fowls that we had ever tasted from the London coops. Now," said I to Mrs. Unwin, "it is likely that the fowls at Olney may be as good as the fowls at Orpington.

therefore send them; for it is not possible to make so good a use of them in any other way."

My dear, I have another story to tell you, but of a different kind. At Westminster School I was much intimate with Walter Bagot, a brother of Lord Bagot. In the course, as I suppose, of more than twenty years after we left school, I saw him but twice,—once when I called on him at Oxford, and once when he called on me in the Temple. He has a brother who lives about four miles from hence, a man of large estate. It happened that soon after the publication of my first volume, he came into this country on a visit to his brother. Having read my book, and liking it, he took that opportunity to renew his acquaintance with me. I felt much affection for him, and the more because it was plain that after so long a time he still retained his for me. He is now at his brother's. Twice has he visited me in the course of the last week, and this morning he brought Mrs. Bagot with him. He is a good and amiable man, and she a most agreeable woman. At this second visit I made him acquainted with my translation of Homer. He was highly pleased to find me so occupied, and with all that glow of friendship that would make it criminal in me to doubt his sincerity for a moment, insisted upon being employed in promoting the subscription, and engaged himself and all his connections, which are extensive, and many of them of high rank, in my service. His chariot put up at an inn in the town while he was here, and I rather wondered that at his departure he chose to walk to his chariot, and not to be taken up at the door; but when he had been gone about a quarter of an hour, his servant came with a letter his master had written at the inn, and which, he said, required no answer. I opened it, and found as follows:—

OLNEY, *November* 30, 1785.

MY GOOD FRIEND,—You will oblige me by accepting this early subscription to your Homer, even before you have fixed your plan and price; which when you have done, if you will send me a parcel of your subscription papers, I will endeavour to circulate them among my friends and acquaintance as far as I can. Health and happiness attend you.—Yours ever, WALTER BAGOT.

N.B.—It contained a draft for twenty pounds.

My dearest cousin, for whom I feel more than I can say, I once more thank you for all; which reminds me, by the way, of thanking you in particular for your offer of oysters. I am very fond of them, and few things agree better with me, when they are stewed without butter. You may perceive that I improve upon your hands, and grow less and less coy in the matter of acceptance continually.

In a letter of Mr. Unwin's to his mother he says thus: "I have been gratified to-day by the high character given of my friend's poem in the 'Critical Review.'" So far, therefore, I have passed the pikes. The Monthly Critics have not yet noticed me.

Adieu, my faithful, kind, and consolatory friend.—Ever, ever yours.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

THANKS FOR A GIFT.

Thursday Evening.

OH that this letter had wings, that it might fly to tell you that my desk, the most elegant, the compactest, the most commodious desk in the world, and of all the desks that ever were or ever shall be, the desk that I love the most, is safe arrived! Nay, my dear, it was actually at Sherrington when the waggoner's wife (for the man himself was not at home) croaked out her abominable *No!*—yet she examined the bill of lading, but either did it so carelessly, or, as poor Dick Madan used to say, with such an *ignorant eye*, that my name escaped her. My precious cousin, you have bestowed too much upon me. I have nothing to render you in return, but the affectionate feelings of a heart most truly sensible of your kindness. How pleasant it is to write upon such a green bank! I am sorry that I have so nearly reached the end of my paper. I have now, however, only room to say that Mrs. Unwin is delighted with her box, and bids me do more than thank you for it. What can I do more at this distance but say that she loves you heartily, and that so do I? The pocket-book is also the

completest that I ever saw, and the watch-chain the most brilliant.

Adieu for a little while. Now for Homer.—My dear, yours.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

January 16, 1786.

MY DEAREST COUSIN,—The little item that you inserted in your cover, concerning a review of a certain author's work, in the "Gentleman's Magazine," excited Mrs. Unwin's curiosity to see it in a moment. In vain did I expostulate with her on the vanity of all things here below, especially of human praise, telling her what perhaps indeed she had heard before, but what on such an occasion I thought it not amiss to remind her of, that at the best it is but as the idle wind that whistles as it passes by, and that a little attention to the dictates of reason would presently give her the victory over all the curiosity that she felt so troublesome. For a short time, indeed, I prevailed, but the next day the fit returned upon her with more violence than before. She would see it—she was resolved that she would see it that moment. You must know, my dear, that a watchmaker lives within two or three doors of us, who takes in the said magazine for a gentleman at some distance, and as it happened, it had not been sent to its proper owner. Accordingly the messenger that the lady despatched returned with it, and she was gratified. As to myself, I read the article, indeed, and read it to her; but I do not concern myself much, you may suppose, about such matters, and shall only make two or three cursory remarks, and so conclude. In the first place, therefore, I observe, that it is enough to craze a poor poet to see his verses so miserably misprinted, and, which is worse if possible, his very praises in a manner annihilated, by a jumble of the lines out of their places, so that in two instances the end of the period takes the lead of the beginning of it. The said poet has still the more reason to be crazed, because the said magazine is in general singularly correct. But at Christmas, no doubt, your printer will get drunk as well as another man. It is astonishing to me that they know

so exactly how much I translated of Voltaire. My recollection, refreshed by them, tells me that they are right in the number of the books that they affirm to have been translated by me; but till they brought the fact again to my mind, I myself had forgotten that part of the business entirely. My brother had twenty guineas for eight books of English Henriade, and I furnished him with four of them. They are not equally accurate in the affair of the Tame Mouse. That I kept one is certain, and that I kept it as they say, in my bureau; but not in the Temple. It was while I was at Westminster. I kept it till it produced six young ones, and my transports when I first discovered them cannot easily be conceived,—any more than my mortification, when, going again to visit my little family, I found that mouse herself had eaten them! I turned her loose, in indignation, and vowed never to keep a mouse again. Who the writer of this article can be I am not able to imagine, nor where he had his information of these particulars But they know all the world, and everything that belongs to it. The mistake that has occasioned the mention of Unwin's name in the margin would be ludicrous if it were not, inadvertently indeed, and innocently on their part, profane. I should have thought it impossible that, when I spoke of One who had been wounded in the hands and in the side, any reader in a Christian land could have been for a moment at a loss for the person intended.

Adieu, my dear cousin. I intended that one of these should have served as a case for the other, but before I was aware of it, I filled both sheets completely. However, as your money burns in your pocket, there is no harm done. I shall not add a syllable more except that I am, and, while I breathe, ever shall be, most truly yours.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

THANKS FOR A GIFT.

OLNEY, *January* 31, 1786.

IT is very pleasant, my dearest cousin, to receive a present so delicately conveyed as that which I received so lately from

Anonymous; but is also very painful to have nobody to thank for it. I find myself, therefore, driven by stress of necessity to the following resolution, namely, that I will constitute you my Thank-receiver-general for whatsoever gift I shall receive hereafter, as well as for those that I have already received from a nameless benefactor. I therefore thank you, my cousin, for a most elegant present, including the most elegant compliment that ever poet was honoured with; for a snuff-box of tortoise-shell, with a beautiful landscape on the lid of it, glazed with crystal, having the figures of three hares in the foreground, and inscribed above with these words, *The Peasant's Nest;* and below with these, *Tiney, Puss, and Bess.* For all and every of these I thank you, and also for standing proxy on this occasion. Nor must I forget to thank you, that so soon after I had sent you the first letter of Anonymous, I received another in the same hand.—Their! Now I am a little easier.

I have almost conceived a design to send up half a dozen stout country fellows to tie by the leg to their respective bed-posts the company that so abridges your opportunity of writing me. Your letters are the joy of my heart, and I cannot endure to be robbed, by I know not whom, of half my treasure. But there is no comfort without a drawback, and therefore it is that I, who have unknown friends, have unknown enemies also. Ever since I wrote last I find myself in better health, and my nocturnal spasms and fever considerably abated. I intend to write to Dr. Kerr on Thursday, that I may gratify him with an account of my amendment; for to him I know that it will be a gratification. Were he not a physician, I should regret that he lives so distant, for he is a most agreeable man; but being what he is, it would be impossible to have his company, even if he were a neighbour, unless in time of sickness; at which time, whatever charms he might have himself, my own must necessarily lose much of their effect on him.

When I write to you, my dear, what I have already related to the General, I am always fearful lest I should tell you that for news with which you are well acquainted. For once, however, I will venture. On Wednesday last I received from Johnson the MS. copy of a specimen that I had sent to the

General; and, enclosed in the same cover, notes upon it by an unknown critic. Johnson, in a short letter, recommended him to me as a man of unquestionable learning and ability. On perusal and consideration of his remarks, I found him such; and having nothing so much at heart as to give all possible security to yourself and the General that my work shall not come forth unfinished, I answered Johnson that I would gladly submit my MS. to his friend. He is, in truth, a very clever fellow, perfectly a stranger to me, and one who, I promise you, will not spare for severity of animadversion, where he shall find occasion. It is impossible for you, my dearest cousin, to express a wish that I do not equally feel a wish to gratify. You are desirous that Maty should see a book of my Homer; and for that reason, if Maty *will* see a book of it, he shall be welcome, although time is likely to be precious, and consequently any delay, that is not absolutely necessary, as much as possible to be avoided. I am now revising the Iliad. It is a business that will cost me four months, perhaps five; for I compare the very words as I go, and if much alteration should occur, must transcribe the whole. The first book I have almost transcribed already. To these five months Johnson says that nine more must be added for printing; and upon my own experience I will venture to assure you that the tardiness of printers will make those nine months twelve. There is danger, therefore, that my subscribers may think that I make them wait too long, and that they who know me not may suspect a bubble. How glad shall I be to read it over in an evening, book by book, as fast as I settle the copy, to you and to Mrs. Unwin! She has been my touchstone always, and without reference to her taste and judgment I have printed nothing. With one of you at each elbow I should think myself the happiest of all poets.

The General and I, having broken the ice, are upon the most comfortable terms of correspondence. He writes very affectionately to me, and I say everything to him that comes uppermost. I could not write frequently to any creature living upon any other terms than these. He tells me of infirmities that he has, which make him less active than he

was. I am sorry to hear that he has any such. Alas! alas! he was young when I saw him, only twenty years ago.

I have the most affectionate letter imaginable from Colman, who writes to me like a brother. The Chancellor is yet dumb.

May God have you in his keeping, my beloved cousin.—Farewell.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

EXPECTATION OF A VISIT.

OLNEY, *February* 9, 1786.

MY DEAREST COUSIN,—I have been impatient to tell you that I am impatient to see you again. Mrs. Unwin partakes with me in all my feelings upon this subject, and longs also to see you. I should have told you so by the last post, but have been so completely occupied by this tormenting specimen, that it was impossible to do it. I sent the General a letter on Monday, that would distress and alarm him; I sent him another yesterday, that will, I hope, quiet him again. Johnson has apologized very civilly for the multitude of his friend's strictures; and his friend has promised to confine himself in future to a comparison of me with the original, so that, I doubt not, we shall jog on merrily together. And now, my dear, let me tell you once more, that your kindness in promising us a visit has charmed us both. I shall see you again. I shall hear your voice. We shall take walks together. I will show you my prospects, the hovel, the alcove, the Ouse and its banks,—everything that I have described. I anticipate the pleasure of those days, not very far distant, and feel a part of it at this moment. Talk not of an inn! Mention it not for your life! We have never had so many visitors, but we could easily accommodate them all; though we have received Unwin, and his wife, and his sister, and his son, all at once. My dear, I will not let you come till the end of May, or beginning of June, because before that time my green-house will not be ready to receive us, and it is the only pleasant room belonging to us. When the plants go out we go in. I line it

with mats, and spread the floor with mats; and there you shall sit, with a bed of mignionette at your side, and a hedge of honeysuckles, roses, and jasmine; and I will make you a bouquet of myrtle every day. Sooner than the time I mention the country will not be in complete beauty. And I will tell you what you shall find at your first entrance. Imprimis, as soon as you have entered the vestibule, if you cast a look on either side of you, you shall see on the right hand a box of my making. It is the box in which have been lodged all my hares, and in which lodges Puss at present; but he, poor fellow, is worn out with age, and promises to die before you can see him. On the right hand stands a cupboard, the work of the same author; it was once a dove-cage, but I transformed it. Opposite to you stands a table, which I also made; but a merciless servant having scrubbed it until it became paralytic, it serves no purpose now but of ornament; and all my clean shoes stand under it. On the left hand, at the further end of this superb vestibule, you will find the door of the parlour, into which I will conduct you, and where I will introduce you to Mrs. Unwin, unless we should meet her before, and where we will be as happy as the day is long. Order yourself, my cousin, to the Swan at Newport, and there you shall find me ready to conduct you to Olney.

My dear, I have told Homer what you say about casks and urns, and have asked him whether he is sure that it is a cask in which Jupiter keeps his wine. He swears that it is a cask, and that it will never be anything better than a cask to eternity. So if the god is content with it, we must even wonder at his taste and be so too.—Adieu, my dearest, dearest cousin.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

ANTICIPATION OF A VISIT.

Monday, *February* 27, 1786.

My Dearest Cousin,—As I sat by the fireside this day after dinner, I saw your chamber windows coated over with

snow, so that the glass was hardly visible. This circumstance naturally suggested the thought that it will be otherwise when you come. Then the roses will begin to blow, and perhaps the heat will be as troublesome as the cold is now. The next thought of course was this,—three long months must pass before we shall see her! I will, however, be as patient as I can, and comfort myself with the thought that we shall meet at last. You said in one of your letters that you had resolved to dream of nobody but of Homer and his translator. I hope you keep your resolution, for I can assure you that the last-mentioned dreams most comfortably of you. About three nights since I dreamed that, sitting in our summer-house, I saw you coming towards me. *With inexpressible pleasure I sprang to meet you, caught you in my arms, and said—Oh, my precious, precious cousin, may God make me thankful that I see thy face again!* Now, this was a dream, and no dream;—it was only a shadow while it lasted, but if we both live, and live to meet, it will be realized hereafter. Yet, alas! the passages and events of the day as well as of the night are little better than dreams. Poor Bagot! whom I love sincerely because he has a singular affection for me. Ten days since, he wrote me a letter, by which it appeared he was cheerful and happy; yesterday brought me another, consisting of only about six lines, in which he tells me that his wife is dead. I transcribe it, for it is impossible to do it justice any other way:—

BLITHFIELD, *Feb.* 23, 1786.

Oh, my dear friend,—Things are much altered with me since I wrote last. My harp is turned into mourning, and my music into the voice of weeping. Her whom you saw and loved,—her whom nobody ever yet saw and knew that did not love,—her have I lost. Pray to God for me, that for Christ's sake he would continue to comfort and support both me and mine under our great affliction.—Yours ever,

WALTER BAGOT.

Poor man! I can attest the truth of what he says from my own knowledge of her, however short. There are people whose characters we penetrate and fully comprehend in a moment: she was one of those. Her character was so strongly marked, in the gentleness of her aspect, her voice, her carriage, that

the instant she was seen she was beloved. My knowledge of her was two hours long, and no more; yet when I took leave of her, I could not help saying, "God bless you, madam." Indeed, my cousin, I never felt so much for any man. His own sensibilities are naturally of the quickest, and he was attached to her in the extreme, as it was impossible but that he must be. Mr. Madan's book happened to be mentioned when he was here, when all he said of it was,—"I know not how Mr. Madan finds it, but the longer I know my wife, the more I love her." At that time I had never seen her, but when I did I wondered not.

I hardly know how to leave this subject for another, but it is necessary that I should. So farewell, poor Bagot, for the present; may God comfort thee and thy seven children!—Now for Homer, and the matters to Homer appertaining. Sephus and I are of opinions perfectly different on the subject of such an advertisement as he recommends. The only proper part for me is not to know that such a man as Pope has ever existed. I am so nice upon this subject, that in that note in the specimen in which I have accounted for the anger of Achilles (which, I believe, I may pay myself the compliment to say was never accounted for before), I have not even so much as hinted at the perplexity in which Pope was entangled when he endeavoured to explain it, nor at the preposterous and blundering work that he has made with it. No, my dear, as I told you once before, my attempt has itself a loud voice, and speaks a most intelligible language. Had Pope's translation been good, or had I thought it such, or had I not known that it is admitted, by all whom a knowledge of the original qualifies to judge of it, to be a very defective one, I had never translated myself one line of Homer. Dr. Johnson is the only modern writer who has spoken of it in terms of approbation, at least the only one that I have met with. And his praise of it is such that convinces me, intimately acquainted as I am with Pope's performance, that he talked at random—that either he had never examined it by Homer's, or never since he was a boy. For I would undertake to produce numberless passages from it, if need were, not only ill translated, but

meanly written. It is not, therefore, for me, convinced as I am of the truth of all I say, to go forth into the world holding up Pope's translation with one hand as a work to be extolled, and my own with the other as a work still wanted. It is plain to me that I behave with sufficient liberality on the occasion, if, neither praising nor blaming my predecessor, I go right forward, and leave the world to decide between us.

Now, to come nearer to myself. Poets, my dear (it is a secret I have lately discovered), are born to trouble, and of all poets, translators of Homer to the most. Our dear friend, the General, whom I truly love, in his last letter mortified me not a little. I do not mean by suggesting lines that he thought might be amended, for I hardly ever wrote fifty lines together that I could not afterwards have improved; but by what appeared to me an implied censure on the whole, or nearly the whole, quire that I sent you. It was a great work, he said; it should be kept long in hand—years, if it were possible; that it stood in need of such amendment; that it ought to be made worthy of me; that he could not think of showing it to Maty, that he could not even think of laying it before Johnson and his friend, in its present condition! Now, my dear, understand thou this: if there lives a man who stands clear of the charge of careless writing, I am that man. I might prudently, perhaps, but I could not honestly, admit that charge. It would account, in a way favourable to my own ability, for many defects of which I am guilty; but it would be disingenuous and untrue. The copy which I sent to you was almost a new, I mean a second, translation, as far as it went. With the first I had taken pains, but with the second I took more. I weighed many expressions, exacted from myself the utmost fidelity to my author, and tried all the numbers upon my own ear again and again. If, therefore, after all this care, the execution be such as in the General's account it seems to be, I appear to have made a shipwreck of my hopes at once. He said, indeed, that the similes delighted him, and the catalogue of the ships surpassed his expectations: but his commendation of so small a portion of the whole affected me rather painfully, as it seemed to amount to an implied condemnation of the rest. I have

been the more uneasy because I know his taste to be good; and by the selection that he made of lines that he thought should be altered, he proved it such. I altered them all, and thanked him, as I could very sincerely, for his friendly attention. Now what is the present state of my mind on this subject? It is this: I do not myself think ill of what I have done, nor at the same time so foolishly well as to suppose that it has no blemishes. But I am sadly afraid that the General's anxiety will make him extremely difficult to be pleased: I fear that he will require of me more than any other man would require, or than he himself would require of any other writer. What I can do to give him satisfaction, I am perfectly ready to do; but it is possible for an anxious friend to demand more thon my ability could perform. Not a syllable of all this, my dear, to him or to any creature,—Mum!

Your question, your natural, well-warranted, and most reasonable question, concerning me and Mrs. Unwin, shall be answered at large when we meet. But to Mrs. Unwin I refer you for that answer; she is most desirous to give you a most explicit one. I have a history, my dear, belonging to me, which I am not the proper person to relate. You have heard somewhat of it—as much as it was possible for me to write; but that *somewhat* bears a most inconsiderable proportion to the whole.

All intercourse has ceased between us and Lady Austen almost these two years. This mystery shall also be accounted for when you come. She has left Bristol, and is at present settled within a mile of us with her sister. You are candid, and will give me credit when I say that the fault is not with us.

I have disposed of thirty-three papers of proposals—even I. Mr. Throckmorton has most obligingly given me his name, and has undertaken the disposal of twelve. Lord Archibald Hamilton has also subscribed, at the instance of a neighbour of mine, and does me the honour to say that he subscribes with pleasure. Adieu, my beloved cousin. Thank you for all your welcome intelligence. I had need of it.—Yours, most truly.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

ANTICIPATION OF A VISIT.

April 3, Monday, 1786.

HAVE you the hardiness to bid me wait till August for your coming, or even to suggest such an idea to me, who have been so long numbering off days and weeks with impatient expectation of June? My cousin, I will not wait till August, neither can Mrs. Unwin wait till August. I insist, and she entreats, that you come at the time appointed. Is there anything future to which we look forward with equal pleasure? With pleasure, indeed, we expect the General—I have not, save yourself, a friend whom I should expect with more; but you with pleasure peculiar and above all. Come then! difficulties will perhaps vanish at your appearance; fifty points may be adjusted when you are on the spot, not one of which can be touched without you. Of this be sure, that by some means or other you shall have a place at Olney. The project in hand will probably in the end succeed, and if it should not, others may be started; but not till you come. You have given a hope that will not be relinquished while in Olney may be found one brick or stone upon another. A lodging for the present is ready for you, even should you come to-morrow.

I love you, and thank you for all your hints concerning the General. Suspect not, from anything said above, that my affection for him is not as warm as you wish it to be. It is; and will, I doubt not, increase in fervour. But with him I have an intimacy to make. With you I have always had one, however long interrupted; and the place that you have held with me you will ever hold, should we outlive the years of Methuselah. But, as I said, I thank you for those hints, and if he have any little likings to be gratified (for who has not some?) you cannot do a kinder thing by us than to give us instruction in them all; for we sincerely wish to make his abode here as pleasant to him as possible. Henry comes with him. Give me a little history of him also, for him I have never seen since he was an urchin. As to the affair of religious conversa-

tion, fear me not lest I should trespass upon his peace in that way. Your views, my dear, upon the subject of a proper conduct in that particular are mine also. When I left St. Alban's, I left it under impressions of the existence of a God, and of the truth of Scripture that I had never felt before. I had unspeakable delight in the discovery, and was impatient to communicate a pleasure to others that I found so superior to everything that bears the name. This eagerness of spirit, natural to persons newly informed, and the less to be wondered at in me who had just emerged from the horrors of despair, made me imprudent, and, I doubt not, troublesome to many. Forgetting that I had not *those* blessings at my command which it is God's peculiar prerogative to impart—spiritual light and affections—I required, in effect, of all with whom I conversed that they should see with my eyes; and stood amazed that the gospel, which with me was all in all, should meet with opposition, or should occasion disgust in any. But the gospel could not be the word of God if it did not; for it foretells its own reception among men, and describes it as exactly such. Good is intended, but harm is done too often by the zeal with which I was at that time animated. But as in affairs of this life, so in religious concerns likewise, experience begets some wisdom in all who are not incapable of being taught. I do not now, neither have I for a long time, made it my practice to force the subject of evangelical truth on any. I received it not from man myself, neither can any man receive it from me. God is light, and from him all light must come: to *His* teaching, therefore, I leave those whom I was once so alert to instruct myself. If a man asks my opinion, or calls for an account of my faith, he shall have it; otherwise I trouble him not. Pulpits for preaching; and the parlour, the garden, and the walk abroad, for friendly and agreeable conversation.

I am grieved at what you tell me of the General's state of health. I fear that he carries his death's wound about him. The precariousness of *his* life makes me feel, if possible, the more comfort that yours seems to be held by a stronger tenure. May you be spared as long as I am spared; for having found you again, I am determined never to lose you more. I am

delighted, too, that my uncle at his years is so stout. May he long continue so!

Mr. Madan and I were never correspondents. Once or twice, however, I have had an occasional letter from him, and last Friday brought me another. I was, as you may suppose, surprised. He wrote merely to rectify, as he accounts it, my typography. *Placed* he would have printed *plac'd*, and so of all words terminating in *ed*, and usually in former times abridged. But I shall not accede—I cannot indeed—to his counsel. Johnson long since, and the General lately, recommended to me the contrary practice; and the fashion of the day makes it necessary. It is also a real improvement, for the judgment corrects the eye, and in reading reduces the syllables to their just number: add to which, we have no need to make pronunciation of our language more difficult to foreigners than it is of necessity, which yet must be the certain consequence of spelling one way and pronouncing another. For *plac'd*, according to the rule by which we make *c* before a consonant hard, ought to be pronounced *plackd*. But too much of this. He wrote me a dry letter; but *some things* considered, it did him honour in my account, because it proves that he interests himself in my work, notwithstanding all.

I wrote, my dearest cousin, to the General on Saturday, and then told him that he would not receive my bundle of poetry in less than a fortnight. At that time I thought of detaining the third, fourth, and fifth books, till I should have rerevised the first, and then that I would send them all at once. But I have changed my mind. Fuseli is at present out of work. It would not be civil to make him wait long for more, and the three last-mentioned books are ready: I shall, therefore, as before, send them to you; you will communicate with the General; and he to Fuseli. They will set off on Wednesday by Wellingborough coach. The first quire, destined to Dr. Maty's inspection, I am now going to take in hand. Should I find it necessary to transcribe the whole or much of it, that business, and the correction of it together, will necessarily take time; but you shall have it as soon as possible. My dear, stroke my pate, and say that I am a good child. I send you,

I suppose, above two thousand lines, and not two hundred in the whole of the first translation! In fact, I am making a new translation, and find that the work will be much a gainer by it. I grudge no pains so that I may but be a famous poet, and make you as proud as I wish you to be of your cousin in a corner. *Apropos de ça:*—If I have not visited my neighbours, it has been owing to many lions in the way: to a dread of strangers, increased by having seen none for many years; to a total incapacity through indisposition, but very lately in part removed; and to necessity, arising from the following important consideration: I keep no horse, and the hackneys of Olney are not ostensible; chaises are become more expensive than ever, and some of the country gentlemen (Mr. Wright in particular), who have made advances, live too distant to be reached on foot. I have not sent to Kerr, for these reasons:—he depended, by his own avowal, principally on emetics, which seem to fail, though I have neither exceeded nor fallen short. The tincture that he has given me is, by his account of it, of two that are best in the world for stomach cases, the most efficacious: therefore nothing better is to be expected from him of that kind; and the approaching summer gives me hope better founded than any I can build upon medicine, of open pores, and consequently of relief, if not of a cure. My fever is not worth a thought: I suppose I have had more or less of it almost all my life.—I am now rummaging things together.—I dedicate to whomsoever you shall choose. —I have two dozen of wine and four bottles.—If you should call at Debrett's, pray search the book for the name of Throckmorton in particular. I knew not that Sephus had so ennobled my subscription, till you told me. I hold myself much obliged to him, and so shall tell him, when time shall serve. I love and honour my uncle for his very handsome notice of me on the occasion. Our politics do not jar; in the principle we are two tallies. I only differ from you a little touching the king's head. He had, through ill advice or want of honesty, acted with great duplicity. He was either to reign or die; there was no alternative. None dared to trust him;—the axe was the consequence. Adieu, my dear fellow-pilgrim in all

our pleasant places, for such you shall be.—Ever affectionately yours, &c.

I tell you a remarkable coincidence of dates and events: I received your present of wine on my birth-day, November 26; the desk on the 7th of December, the day when I left London; and my snuff-box, &c., from Anonymous, on the 24th of January, on which day, twelve years ago, I plunged into a melancholy that made me almost an infant. I cannot bear to be so concise as want of room obliged me to be on the other side, respecting the wine. Your kindness in making the inquiry is to me better than the wine itself: this is a literal truth, and you may credit it without the least reserve. I had a little of my own when the hamper came, which is the cause of my present abundance. Once more bless you!

The most evident necessity presents itself for your coming in June. We just now learn that these clever apartments cannot be had. The son is to succeed the apprentice in the second chamber. We have offered a bed in our house during your stay, but it is not accepted. There is a tight little house opposite, which I daresay you may have, that will hold you and suite; but it has a west aspect. Perhaps by open windows and curtains it might be kept cool. Mother and daughter only live in it.

Mrs. Unwin begs me to give her most affectionate respects. If you understood Latin, I could tell you, in an elegant line from Horace, how much we both think of you, and long to see you. Dearest cousin, adieu.

We have expedients *in petto* for settling you at Olney, some of which will surely succeed, but which we will not discuss till you come, that is to say—in June. This is positively the last postscript.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

ON THE DELAY OF A VISIT.

OLNEY, *April* 17, 1786.

MY DEAREST COUSIN,—If you will not quote Solomon, I will. He says, and as beautiful as truly—"Hope deferred

maketh the heart sick; but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life." I feel how much reason he had on his side when he made this observation, and am myself sick of your fortnight's delay.....

The vicarage was built by Lord Dartmouth, and was not finished till some time after we arrived at Olney; consequently it is new. It is a smart stone building, well sashed; by much too good for the living, but just what I would wish for you. It has, as you justly concluded from my premises, a garden, but rather calculated for use than ornament. It is square, and well walled, but has neither arbour, nor alcove, nor other shade, except the shadow of the house. But we have two gardens, which are yours. Between your mansion and ours is interposed nothing but an orchard, into which a door opening out of our garden affords us the easiest communication imaginable, will save the round-about by the town, and make both houses one. Your chamber windows look over the river, and over the meadows, to a village called Emberton, and command the whole length of a long bridge, described by a certain poet, together with a view of the road at a distance. Should you wish for books at Olney, you must bring them with you, or you will wish in vain; for I have none but the works of a certain poet, Cowper, of whom, perhaps, you have heard, and they are as yet but two volumes. They may multiply hereafter, but at present they are no more.

You are the first person for whom I have heard Mrs. Unwin express such feelings as she does for you. She is not profuse in professions, nor forward to enter into treaties of friendship with new faces; but when her friendship is once engaged, it may be confided in even unto death. She loves you already, and how much more will she love you before this time twelvemonth! I have, indeed, endeavoured to describe you to her; but perfectly as I have you by heart, I am sensible that my picture cannot do you justice. I never saw one that did. Be you what you may, you are much beloved, and will be so at Olney, and Mrs. U. expects you with the pleasure that one feels at the return of a long-absent, dear relation; that is to say,

with a pleasure such as mine. She sends you her warmest affections.

On Friday I received a letter from dear Anonymous, apprising me of a parcel that the coach would bring me on Saturday. Who is there in the world that has, or thinks he has, reason to love me to the degree that he does? But it is no matter. He chooses to be unknown, and his choice is, and ever shall be, so sacred to me, that if his name lay on the table before me reversed, I would not turn the paper about that I might read it! Much as it would gratify me to thank him, I would turn my eyes away from the forbidden discovery! I long to assure him that those same eyes, concerning which he expresses such kind apprehensions, lest they should suffer by this laborious undertaking, are as well as I could expect them to be if I were never to touch either book or pen. Subject to weakness, and occasional slight inflammations, it is probable that they will always be; but I cannot remember the time when they enjoyed anything so like an exemption from these infirmities as at present. One would almost suppose that reading Homer were the best ophthalmic in the world. I should be happy to remove his solicitude on the subject, but it is a pleasure that he will not let me enjoy. Well, then, I will be content without it; and so content that, though I believe you, my dear, to be in full possession of all this mystery, you shall never know me, while you live, either directly or by hints of any sort, attempt to extort or to steal the secret from you. I should think myself as justly punishable as the Bethshemites for looking into the ark, which they were not allowed to touch.

I have not sent for Kerr, for Kerr can do nothing but send me to Bath, and to Bath I cannot go, for a thousand reasons. The summer will set me up again. I grow fat every day, and shall be as big as Gog or Magog, or both put together, before you come.

I did actually live three years with Mr. Chapman, a solicitor—that is to say, I slept three years in his house; but I lived, that is to say, I spent my days in Southampton Row, as you very well remember. There was I, and the future

Lord Chancellor, constantly employed from morning to night in giggling and making giggle, instead of studying the law. O fie, cousin! how could you do so?—I am pleased with Lord Thurlow's inquiries about me. If he takes it into that inimitable head of his, he may make a man of me yet. I could love him heartily, if he would but deserve it at my hands. That I did so once is certain. The Duchess of ——, who in the world set her a-going? But if all the duchesses in the world were spinning, like so many whirligigs, for my benefit, I would not stop them. It is a noble thing to be a poet, it makes all the world so lively. I might have preached more sermons than even Tillotson did, and better, and the world would have been still fast asleep; but a volume of verse is a fiddle that puts the universe in motion.—Yours, my dear friend and cousin.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

ANTICIPATION OF A VISIT.

June 12, 1786.

I AM neither young nor superannuated, yet am I a child. When I had read your letter I grumbled, not at you, my dearest cousin, for you are in no fault, but at the whole generation of coach-makers, as you may suppose, and at yours in particular. I foresaw and foreknew that he would fail in his promise, and yet was disappointed; was, in truth, no more prepared for what I expected with so much reason, than if I had not at all expected it. I grumbled till we went to dinner, and at intervals till we had dined; and when dinner was over, with very little encouragement I could actually have cried. And if I had, I should in truth have thought them tears as well bestowed as most that I have shed for many years. At first I numbered months, then weeks, then days, and was just beginning to number hours, and now I am thrown back to days again. My first speech was, after folding up your letter (for I will honestly tell you all), "I am crazed with Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, and St. Albans, and Totteridge, and Hadley. When is she to set out? When is she to be

here? Do tell me, for perhaps you understand it better than I." "Why," says Mrs. Unwin (with much more composure in her air than properly belonged to her, for she also had her feelings on the occasion), "she sets out to-morrow se'ennight, and will be here on the Wednesday after." "And who knows that?" replied I; "will the coach-maker be at all more punctual in repairing the old carriage than in making the new one? For my part, I have no hope of seeing her this month; and if it be possible, I will not think of it, lest I should be again disappointed." And to say the truth, my dear, though hours have passed since thus I said, and I have had time for cooler consideration, the suspicion still sticks close to me, that more delays may happen. A philosopher would prepare himself for such an event; but I am no philosopher, at least when the comfort of seeing you is in question. I believe in my heart that there have been just as many true philosophers upon earth as there have been men that have had little or no feeling, and not one more. Swift truly says—

> "Indifference, clad in reason's guise,
> All want of fortitude supplies."

When I wake in the night, I feel my spirits the lighter because you are coming. When I am not at Troy, I am either occupied in the recollection of a thousand passages of my past life in which you were a partaker with me, or conversing about you with Mrs. Unwin. Thus my days and nights have been spent principally, ever since you determined upon this journey, and especially, and almost without interruption from any other subject, since the time of your journey has seemed near at hand. While I despaired, as I did for many years, that I should ever see you more, I thought of you, indeed, and often, but with less solicitude. I used to say to myself, "Providence has so ordered it, and it is my duty to submit. He has cast me at a distance from her, and from all whom I once knew. He did it, and not I; it is He who has chosen my situation for me. Have I not reason to be thankful that, since he designed me to pass a part of my life, and no inconsiderable one neither, in a state of the deepest melancholy, he appointed

me a friend in Mrs. Unwin, who should share all my sorrows with me, and watch over me in my helpless condition, night and day? What and where had I been without her?" Such considerations were sufficient to reconcile me at that time to perpetual separation even from you, because perpetual I supposed it must be, and without remedy. But now every hour of your absence seems long, for this very natural reason—because the same Providence has given me a hope that you will be present with me soon. A good that seems at an immeasurable distance, and that we cannot hope to reach, has therefore the less influence on our affections. But the same good brought nearer, made to appear practicable, promised to our hopes, and almost in possession, engages all our faculties and desires. All this is according to the natural and necessary course of things in the human heart; and the philosophy that would interfere with it, is folly at least, if not frenzy. A throne has at present but little sensible attraction for me. And why? Perhaps only because I know that should I break my heart with wishes for a throne, I should never reach one. But did I know assuredly that I should put on a crown to-morrow, perhaps I too should feel ambition, and account the interposing night tedious. The sum of the whole matter, my dear, is this: that this villanous coach-maker has mortified me monstrously, and that I tremble lest he should do so again. From you I have no fears. I see in your letter, and all the way through it, what pains you take to assure me and give me comfort. I am and will be comforted for that very reason, and will wait still other ten days with all the patience that I can muster. You, I know, will be punctual if you can, and that at least is matter of real consolation.

I approve altogether, my cousin beloved, of your sending your goods to the waggon on Saturday, and cookee by the coach on Tuesday. She will be here, perhaps, by four in the afternoon, at the latest by five, and will have quite time enough to find out all the cupboards and shelves in her department before you arrive. But I declare and protest that cookee shall sleep that night at our house, and get her breakfast here next morning. You will break her heart, child, if

you send her into a strange house, where she will find nothing that has life but the curate, who has not much neither. Servant he keeps none. A woman makes his bed, and after a fashion, as they say, dresses his dinner, and then leaves him to his lucubrations. I do, therefore, insist on it, and so does Mrs. Unwin, that cookee shall be our guest for that time; and from this we will not depart. I tell thee besides, that I shall be more glad to see her than ever I was in my life to see one whom I never saw before. Guess why, if you can.

You must number your miles fifty-six instead of fifty-four. The fifty-sixth mile ends but a few yards beyond the vicarage. Soon after you shall have entered Olney, you will find an opening on your right hand. It is a lane that leads to your dwelling. There your coach may stop and set down Mrs. Eaton. When she has walked about forty yards she will spy a green gate and rails on her left hand; and when she has opened the gate and reached the house-door, she will find herself at home. But we have another manœuvre to play off upon you, and in which we positively will not be opposed, or if we are, it shall be to no purpose. I have an honest fellow that works in my garden. His name is Kitchener, and we call him Kitch for brevity. He is sober, and as trusty as the day. He has a smart blue coat, that when I had worn it some years I gave him, and he has now worn it some years himself. I shall set him on horseback, and order him to the Swan at Newport, there to wait your arrival; and if you should not stop at that place, as perhaps you may not, immediately to throw himself into your suite, and to officiate as your guide. For though the way from Newport hither is short, there are turnings that might puzzle your coachman; and he will be of use, too, in conducting you to our house, which otherwise you might not easily find, partly through the stupidity of those of whom you might inquire, and partly from its out-of-the-way situation. My brother drove up and down Olney in quest of us, almost as often as you up and down Chancery Lane in quest of the Madans, with fifty boys and girls at his tail, before he could find us. The first man, therefore, you shall see in a blue coat with white buttons, in the famous town of Newport,

cry "Kitch!" He will immediately answer, "My lady!" and from that moment you are sure not to be lost.

Your house shall be as clean as scrubbing and dry-rubbing can make it, and in all respects fit to receive you. My friend the Quaker, in all that I have seen of his doings, has acquitted himself much to my satisfaction. Some little things, he says, will perhaps be missing at first, in such a multiplicity, but they shall be produced as soon as called for. Mrs. U. has bought you six ducks, and is fatting them for you. She has also rummaged up a coop that will hold six chickens, and designs to people it for you by the first opportunity; for these things are not to be got fit for the table at Olney. Thus, my dear, are all things in the best train possible, and nothing remains but that you come and show yourself. Oh, that moment! Shall we not both enjoy it?—That we shall.

I have received an anonymous complimentary Pindaric Ode from a little poet who calls himself a school-boy. I send you the first stanza by way of specimen. You shall see it all soon:—

TO WM. COWPER, OF THE INNER TEMPLE, ESQ.

ON HIS POEMS IN THE SECOND VOLUME.

In what high strains, my Muse, wilt thou,
Attempt great Cowper's worth to show?
Pindaric strains that tune the lyre;
And 'twould require
A Pindar's fire
To sing great Cowper's worth,—
The lofty bard, delightful sage,
Ever the wonder of the age,
And blessing to the earth.

Adieu, my precious cousin; your lofty bard and delightful sage expects you with all possible affection.—Ever yours.

I am truly sorry for your poor friend Burrows.

Our dinner hour is four o'clock. We will not surfeit you with delicacies; of that be assured. I know your palate, and am glad to know that it is easily pleased. Were it other than it is, it would stand but a poor chance to be gratified at Olney.

I undertake for lettuce and cucumber, and Mrs. U. for all the rest. If she feeds you too well, you must humble her.

LORD JEFFREY TO MR. J. JEFFREY.

OPINION ON MARRIAGE.

EDINBURGH, *4th March* 1799.

MY DEAR JOHN,—Mary is domesticating with her husband, her child, and her cat. Indeed, she scarcely ever stirs from the fireside; and having got another child to bring into existence by-and-by, is so full of anxieties and apprehensions, that I believe she scarcely thinks of anything that is not within her own gates. Examples of this kind really give me a horror of matrimony; at least, they persuade me more and more of the necessity there is for completing one's stores of information, and sources of reflection and entertainment, before they enter into it. There is no possibility of improvement afterwards; that is, if one is really to live a matrimonial life.

Now, for myself and my system of nerves: I believe they are much better, I thank you, than they were when you saw me in London. I have not given them fair play either, since my return to this country, and have not had the virtue to fulfil every part of the moral regimen which my doctors concurred in recommending to me. However, as I have survived the winter, I make no question of getting quite well before midsummer, and have no fear of ever falling into the same state again. So much for goods of the bedy. As to the goods of fortune, I can say but little for myself. I have got no legacies, and discovered no treasure, since you went away; and for the law and its honours and emoluments, I do not seem to be any nearer them than I was the first year I called myself a practitioner. One is quite buried here, among a great crowd of men of decent abilities, and moderate expectation, and it is almost necessary that some great man, or some great accident, should pull you out of it, before you can come into any kind of desirable notice. Geo. Bell, honest man, is writing a great book, upon which he means to raise himself (as a pedestal)

above the heads of all his contemporaries. I have not patience for that; at least, I should like to see how the experiment answers before I think of repeating it. John Wylde* dashed his brains out by a fall from an elevation of that kind, &c.

I want to hear, too, whether you intend to marry immediately, or take another survey of our European beauties before you attach yourself irrevocably. For my part, I think I should marry in the course of this century, if I had only money enough to subsist upon. For the woman, I have no doubt I should find one to my mind in a fortnight; and, indeed, I know more than half a dozen as it is, with whom, upon a shorter notice, I am positive I could become as much in love as it is at all necessary for an affair of that nature.

I begin to despair now of the fortunes of Europe, and scarcely know what to advise the princes and potentates to do for themselves. Something, however, must be done for them speedily; and a hint from you would, I doubt not, be of the greatest service to them, &c.—Most affectionately yours.

LORD JEFFREY TO MR. J. JEFFREY.

ANNOUNCING HIS MARRIAGE.

ST. ANDREWS, *1st August* 1801.

MY DEAR JOHN,—If you have got any of my last letters you will not be surprised to see me here. I am not going to be married yet, however, and shall write you another letter or two from Edinburgh, I am afraid, before I have that news to communicate. Before the month of November, however, I hope to have renounced all the iniquities and unhappinesses of a bachelor, and to be deeply skilled in all the comforts of matrimony before the end of the year. I enter upon the new life with a great deal of faith, love, and fortitude; and not without a reasonable proportion of apprehension and anxiety. I never feared anything for myself; and the excessive carelessness with which I used to look forward when my way was

* "John Wylde, afterwards Professor of Civil Law, and who has now, alas! survived his own fertile and richly-endowed mind."—MACKINTOSH.

lonely, has increased, I believe, this solicitude for my companion. I am not *very* much afraid of our quarrelling or wearying of each other, but I am not sure how we shall bear poverty; and I am sensible we shall be very poor. I do not make £100 a-year, I have told you, by my profession. You would not marry in this situation? and neither would I, if I saw any likelihood of its growing better before I was too old to marry at all, or did not feel the desolation of being in solitude as something worse than any of the inconveniences of poverty. Besides, we trust to Providence, and have hopes of dying before we get into prison, &c.

I wrote my uncle by the packet in June, and communicated to him in a dutiful manner the change I propose to make in my condition. My father says he will probably do something for me on this occasion; but I do not allow myself to entertain any very sanguine expectation. He knows very little about me, and I can easily understand that it may be inconvenient to make any advance at present, which I have no right to receive. I shall certainly never submit to ask, and endeavour to persuade myself that I am above hoping or wishing very anxiously. Catherine has her love to you. She says I flirt so extravagantly with her sisters, that she is determined to make me jealous of you, if you give her any encouragement. She is a very good girl, but nothing prodigious, and quite enough given to flirtation without any assistance from you.

Farewell, then, my good citizen. I hope we shall see you soon, and see you as we used to do, with all your strength and *beauty* about you. As you are now the only unmarried animal in the genealogy, we propose to treat you with great scorn and indignity as soon as you arrive among us;—to put you into a narrow bed, and place you at the lower end of the table, never to wait dinner for you, and to feed you with cold meat and sour wine. Moreover, we mean to lay grievous taxes on you, and make you stand godfather to all our children. If you give any symptoms of reformation, we may probably relent. If you want a wife (or know anybody who wants one), you must come to this ancient city. There are more beauties than you ever saw anywhere else, among the same number of

women; and not more than five or six men to prevent you from choosing among them.

I bathe, and walk, and sleep, and dream away my time, in the most voluptuous manner, but must rouse myself in a week or two, and go to provide a mansion for myself, before the wintry days come back on us again.

Remember me very affectionately to my uncle. Take care of yourself, and believe me always most affectionately yours.

LORD JEFFREY TO MR. J. JEFFREY.

ANNOUNCING HIS MARRIAGE.

EDINBURGH, *2nd October* 1801.

MY DEAR JOHN,—. . . . I have told you I am to be married in a month; but the latter days of my courtship have been dismally overclouded. Poor Dr. Wilson * died in the beginning of September, and his family are still in very great affliction. I was fortunately with them at the time, for the scene was really very distressing, and a great deal too much for young gay girls, quite new to affliction, and accustomed to indulge every emotion without any idea of control. Before I arrived, they had been for two days constantly in the sick-room, and would *all* of them sit up every night till they were carried away in a state of insensibility. It is in these ordinary and vulgar calamities of private life, I think, that the most exquisite misery is endured. Campaigns and revolutions are nothing to them. *Their* horrors are covered up, even from the eyes of the sufferers, with smoke and glory; and the greatness of the events help to disguise their wretchedness.

They are all quite well again; and as it was her father's particular request that his death should not put off our marriage beyond the time that had been originally fixed for it, Catherine has readily agreed that it should take place in the beginning of November. I have taken a house in Buccleuch Place for the winter, and mean to set a great example of economy and industry. I have still some fears,

* His intended father-in-law.

however, of dying the death of other great geniuses—by hunger. Catherine is not any richer by her father's death.—My dear John, I am always most affectionately yours.

LORD JEFFREY TO MR. R. MOREHEAD.

AFTER HIS MARRIAGE.

EDINBURGH, *24th May* 1802.

MY DEAR BOB,—Worse and worse, you see, in the way of regularity. This marriage, you think, will interfere with our correspondence; but I cannot think that yet, and would rather have you lay the blame upon circuits and sessions, and, above all, upon new houses and furniture for rooms. We came here (to Queen Street, I mean) about ten days ago, and have ever since been in such an uproar, with painters and chimney-sweeps, and packages of old books and broken china, that I have scarcely had time to eat my dinner or to find out where my pens and paper were laid till yesterday. Then, you know, this is the beginning of our session; and, moreover, it is the time of the General Assembly of the Scotch National Church; (you apostate dog! where will you find anything so high-sounding as that in your new religion?) And we have parsons and elders by the dozen, with their families, from St. Andrews, to entertain; and I have a cause to plead in the said venerable Assembly. . . . .

There is something dolorous in the breaking up of long intimacies, and the permanent separation of those who have spent so much of their life together. We have spent too much of it together though, I am persuaded, ever to fall off from an intimacy, and shall speak to each with familiarity, although we should not meet for twenty years to come. I can answer for myself, at least, in spite of all the change that marriage is to make upon me. . . . .

Indeed, few things have given me more vexation of late than the prospect of the dissolution of that very pleasant and animated society in which I have spent so much of my time for these last four years, and I am really inclined to be very

sad when I look forward to the time when I shall be deserted by all the friends and companions who possessed much of my confidence and esteem. You are translated into England already. Horner goes to the English bar in a year. S. Smith leaves this country for ever about the same time. Hamilton spends his life abroad as soon as his father's death sets him at liberty. Brougham will most probably push into public life even before a similar event gives him a favourable opportunity. Reddie is lost, and absolutely swallowed up in law. Lord Webb leaves us before winter. Jo. Allen goes abroad with Lord Holland immediately. Adam is gone already, and, except Brown and Jo. Murray, I do not think that one of the associates with whom I have speculated and amused myself will be left with me in the course of eighteen months. It is not easy to form new intimacies, and I know enough of the people among whom I must look for them, to be positive that they will never be worthy their predecessors. Comfort me, then, my dear Bobby, in this real affliction, and prove to me, by your example, that separation is not always followed by forgetfulness, and that we may still improve and gladden each other at a distance. My Kitty is quite well, and very rational and amiable. If it were not for her I should run after my friends, and indulge my inherent spirit of adventure by a new course of exertion. But she is my brother and sister, my father and mother, my Sanscrit, my Sydney, and my right venerable cousin, as old Homer says in Andromache. . . . .

Write me very soon, and tell me what you are doing and meditating, and especially when I am to see you again, and how. It is the sweetest weather in the world, and all are in ecstasy with our prospect, and our evening walks. . . . . Cath. sends her love to you, and hopes you will bring her a pair of gloves when you come down. She is going to Herbertshire she says, some time this autumn.—Believe me always, my dear Bob, yours most affectionately.

LORD JEFFREY TO CHARLES BELL, ESQ.

CONGRATULATIONS ON MARRIAGE.

EDINBURGH, *4th April* 1811.

MY DEAR BELL,—Not many things in this world could give me greater pleasure than the affectionate tone of your letter, and the pleasing picture it holds out to me. You are doing exactly what you should do; and if my approbation is at all necessary to your happiness, you may be in ecstasy. I think all men who are capable of rational happiness ought to marry. I think you in particular likely to derive happiness from marrying; and I think the woman whom you have chosen peculiarly calculated to make you happy. God bless you. You have behaved hitherto with admirable steadiness and magnanimity, and have earned the confidence of all your friends, as well as the means of enjoyment. I cannot lament your nationality very bitterly, both because it holds of all that is happy and amiable, and because I hope it will give us a chance of seeing you often among us. Besides, when you have Scottish tones and smiles perpetually before you, London will become a sort of Scotland to you. You have but two faults in your character, and I think marriage will go a great way to cure them both. One is a little too much ambition, which really is not conducive to happiness; and the other, which arises I believe from the former, is a small degree of misanthropy, particularly towards persons of your own profession. Your wife's sweetness of temper will gradually bring you into better humour with the whole world; and your experience of the incomparable superiority of quiet and domestic enjoyments to all the paltry troubles that are called splendour and distinction, will set to right any other little errors that may now exist in your opinions. At all events, you will be delivered from the persecution of my admonitions, as it would be a piece of unpardonable presumption to lecture a man who has a wife to lecture him at home.

JANE TAYLOR TO MISS E. F.

TO A FRIEND BEFORE HER MARRIAGE.

ONGAR, *September* 23, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—. . . . You are looking forward towards a change so much more important than a merely local one, that it may well appear to you comparatively trifling. That you are about to undergo is, of all changes, the greatest and the most interesting, but one; and that one, if brought into comparison, makes even this appear insignificant. A recollection of the certain and speedy termination of every earthly connection is, at such a season, likely rather to tranquillize than to depress the spirits; it is calculated to allay anxiety, not to damp enjoyment. When marriage is regarded as the forming a connection for *life*, it appears indeed a tremendous experiment; but in truth it is only choosing a companion for a *short journey;* yet with this difference, that if the fellow-travellers become greatly endeared to each other, they have the cheering hope of renewed intercourse and perpetual friendship at their journey's end. . . . .

JANE TAYLOR TO MISS S. L. C.

TO A FRIEND BEFORE HER MARRIAGE.

ONGAR, *March* 24, 1812.

MY VERY DEAR L.,—Though in much uncertainty whether this letter will reach you amidst the bustle of preparation, or after the grand event has taken place, I shall venture to despatch it, hoping that, under whatever circumstances it may arrive, you will not deem it too great a trespass on your time to receive my kindest wishes and most affectionate farewell. Though I have no apprehension of feeling any diminution of interest and regard towards my friend in a new character, yet I cannot but feel that I am taking leave of a name endeared by many a year of friendly intercourse; and while most sincerely rejoicing in a change which seems in every respect

likely to promote your comfort and happiness, you will forgive me for mingling with my heartfelt congratulations some tears of tender regret. There are no forms of expression—at least I cannot command any—which seem adequate to an occasion like the present. With everything to feel, there seems little to be said; the best wishes are so comprehensive that they occupy but a small space; and the strongest emotions are usually the least eloquent. You have, my dear L., my most earnest wishes and prayers for every blessing to attend you in your new and important situation: may you look back upon the transactions of the approaching day with increasing satisfaction and pleasure, every future year of your life!

We can now look back upon past trials with feelings of joy and gratitude: how different is the colouring of the clouds of care while they are spread over us in dense and unbroken masses, and when they are rolling off far in the distance, and leaving but a dark streak in the horizon! Now we rejoice with you, dear L., in the clear sunshine they have left. . . .

JANE TAYLOR TO MISS S. L. C.

TO A FRIEND BEFORE HER MARRIAGE.

ONGAR, *May* 1, 1812.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—In compliance with your kind wish, as well as to gratify my own inclinations, I take up the pen to address a line to you. Circumstances which I need not explain have obliged me to defer writing till it is nearly time to despatch my letter; so that I am under the necessity of sending you an epistle very inadequate to the importance and interest of the occasion. At a future time I shall hope to converse with you at leisure; now I must offer my congratulations with nearly as much brevity as you conveyed your kind adieu, though not with less sincerity and affection.

In this sorrowful world the tones of joy and congratulation are so seldom heard, that one is almost startled by the sound; but they acquire additional sweetness from contrast. It is truly refreshing to me to turn from various causes of pain and

anxiety, to think of my dear L., and contemplate her fair prospects. For though I have lived too long in this changing world to imagine they will never be clouded, yet there is surely every reason to hope that, with the right views and moderated expectations with which you enter your new career, as large a portion of temporal happiness will enliven it as can be desired by those who are looking forward towards a better inheritance. May the blessing of Heaven rest upon you, my dear friend, in your new connection! It is my sincere and earnest prayer for you.

Every day I live convinces me more and more of the folly and uselessness of forming any defined wishes for earthly happiness, either for myself or others that are dear to me; nothing will do but resigning all to the disposal of Him who not only knows, but does what is best for us. To Him I know you have committed all the events of your future life; and in this cheerful dependence you must be safe and happy. . . .

REV. J. H. STEWART TO A YOUNG LADY,

BEFORE HER MARRIAGE.

LIMPSFIELD RECTORY, GODSTONE, SURREY, *Sept.* 1, 1852.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,— . . . . Your dear mother has requested me to write a few lines to you upon the approaching pleasing event; and what can I better say, my dear young friend, than this—that if you would make your marriage happy, first give your whole heart unto Him who says, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever. I will betroth thee unto me in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies." Receive your intended husband as His gift, who in His gracious providence has chosen him for your partner through this wilderness world; that, united "as heirs together of the grace of life," you may be mutual helpers also, assisting each other by your prayers, your counsel, your example, and, above all, by a conversation becoming the gospel of Christ. As you will be housekeepers, let your house be like the houses of the Israelites, who had the blood of the lamb sprinkled *upon the door-*

posts. From the day you take possession of it, let it be consecrated to God by family prayer; master, mistress, and servants, all uniting in setting up a family altar. Besides this, on each day pray together; for as it will promote your happiness to share each other's pleasures and divide each other's cares, this union of interest will be best promoted by mutual thanksgiving for unmerited mercies, and by united prayer, "casting all your care upon Him who careth for you." Next, as far as circumstances will allow, choose your society from those who love the Lord. Follow David's example, who said, "I am a companion of all them that fear Thee:" bearing in mind that we cannot serve God and Mammon; that if we would be blessed we must attend to the Lord's word, "Them that honour me I will honour." I would add, bearing in mind that this world is a world of trial, lay it down as a rule to "forbear one another in love;" that as of necessity circumstances will occur which will have a tendency to try the spirit, or ruffle the temper, or disturb the gentle calm of domestic life, it is your privilege to win your husband by a meek and quiet spirit; which is, in God's sight, of great price. I offer you these suggestions, my dear young friend, as being one of the former lambs of my flock in Liverpool; for though the wide ocean separates our bodies, we are united by a bond which no distance can sever; but which the love of our heavenly Father, and our gracious Redeemer, will preserve until the day when we shall meet to part no more.

Till that day arrive, may the God of all peace and love be with you, your intended husband, your esteemed parents—yes, with all you love and all that love you.—Believe me to remain, my dear young friend, your faithful and very affectionate pastor.

COWPER TO REV. W. BAGOT.

WESTON, *June* 16, 1789.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—You will naturally suppose that the letter in which you announced your marriage occasioned me some concern, though in my answer I had the wisdom to con-

ceal it. The account you gave me of the object of your choice was such as left me at liberty to form conjectures not very comfortable to myself, if my friendship for you were indeed sincere. I have since, however, been sufficiently consoled. Your brother Chester has informed me, that you have married not only one of the most agreeable, but one of the most accomplished women in the kingdom. It is an old maxim, that it is better to exceed expectation than to disappoint it; and with this maxim in your view it was, no doubt, that you dwelt only on circumstances of disadvantage, and would not treat me with a recital of others which abundantly outweigh them. I now congratulate not you only, but myself, and truly rejoice that my friend has chosen for his fellow-traveller through the remaining stages of his journey a companion who will do honour to his discernment, and make his way, so far as it can depend on a wife to do so, pleasant to the last.

My verses on the queen's visit to London either have been printed, or soon will be, in the *World*. The finishing to which you objected I have altered, and have substituted two new stanzas instead of it. Two others also have I struck out, another critic having objected to *them*. I think I am a very tractable sort of a poet. Most of my fraternity would as soon shorten the noses of their children because they were said to be too long, as thus dock their compositions in compliance with the opinion of others. I beg that when my life shall be written hereafter, my authorship's ductability of temper may not be forgotten.—I am, my dear friend, ever yours.

COWPER TO S. ROSE, ESQ.

THE LODGE, *June* 8, 1790.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Among the many who love and esteem you, there is none who rejoices more in your felicity than myself. Far from blaming, I commend you much for connecting yourself, young as you are, with a well-chosen companion for life. Entering on the state with uncontaminated morals, you have the best possible prospect of happiness, and will be secure against a thousand and ten thousand temptations, tc

which, at an early period of life, in such a Babylon as you must necessarily inhabit, you would otherwise have been exposed. I see it too in the light you do, as likely to be advantageous to you in your profession. Men of business have a better opinion of a candidate for employment who is married, because he has given bond to the world, as you observe, and to himself, for diligence, industry, and attention. It is altogether, therefore, a subject of much congratulation; and mine, to which I add Mrs. Unwin's, is very sincere. Samson at his marriage proposed a riddle to the Philistines. I am no Samson, neither are you a Philistine; yet expound to me the following, if you can:—

What are they which stand at a distance from each other, and meet without ever moving?

Should you be so fortunate as to guess it, you may propose it to the company when you celebrate your nuptials; and if you can win thirty changes of raiment by it, as Samson did by his, let me tell you they will be no contemptible acquisition to a young beginner.

You will not, I hope, forget your way to Weston in consequence of your marriage, where you and yours will be always welcome.

COWPER TO S. ROSE, ESQ.

THE LODGE, *Sept.* 13, 1790.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Your letter was particularly welcome to me, not only because it came after a long silence, but because it brought me good news—news of your marriage, and consequently, I trust, of your happiness. May that happiness be durable as your lives, and may you be the *Felices ter et amplius* of whom Horace sings so sweetly! This is my sincere wish, and, though expressed in prose, shall serve as your epithalamium. You comfort me when you say that your marriage will not deprive us of the sight of you hereafter. If you do not wish that I should regret your union, you must make that assurance good as often as you have opportunity.

After perpetual versification during five years, I find myself

at last a vacant man, and reduced to read for my amusement. My Homer is gone to the press, and you will imagine that I feel a void in consequence. The proofs, however, will be coming soon, and I shall avail myself with all my force of this last opportunity to make my work as perfect as I wish it. I shall not, therefore, be long time destitute of employment, but shall have sufficient to keep me occupied all the winter, and part of the ensuing spring, for Johnson purposes to publish either in March, April, or May. My very preface is finished. It did not cost me much trouble, being neither long nor learned. I have spoken my mind as freely as decency would permit on the subject of Pope's version, allowing him, at the same time, all the merit to which I think him entitled. I have given my reasons for translating in blank verse, and hold some discourse on the mechanism of it, chiefly with a view to obviate the prejudices of some people against it. I expatiate a little on the manner in which I think Homer ought to be rendered, and in which I have endeavoured to render him myself, and anticipate two or three cavils, to which I foresee that I shall be liable from the ignorant or uncandid, in order, if possible, to prevent them. These are the chief heads of my preface, and the whole consists of about twelve pages.

It is possible, when I come to treat with Johnson about the copy, I may want some person to negotiate for me; and knowing no one so intelligent as yourself in books, or so well qualified to estimate their just value, I shall beg leave to resort to and rely on you as my negotiator. But I will not trouble you unless I should see occasion. My cousin was the bearer of my MSS. to London. He went on purpose, and returns to-morrow. Mrs. Unwin's affectionate felicitations, added to my own, conclude me, my dear friend, sincerely yours.

The trees of a colonnade will solve my riddle.

REV. J. NEWTON TO REV. MR. R.

February 3, 1775.

Dear Sir,—It would be wrong to make you wait long for an answer to the point you propose in your last. It is an im-

portant one. I am not a casuist by profession, but I will do my best. Suppose I imitate your laconic manner of stating the question and circumstances.

I doubt not but it is very lawful at your age to think of marriage, and, in the situation you describe, to think of money likewise. I am glad you have no person, as you say, *fixedly in view;* in that case advice comes a post or two too late. But your expression seems to intimate that there is one *transiently in view.* If so, since you have no settlement, if she has no money, I cannot but wish she may pass on till she is out of sight and out of mind. I see this will not do; I must get into my own grave way about this grave business. I take it for granted that my friend is free from the love of filthy lucre; and that money will never be the turning-point with you in the choice of a wife. Methinks I hear you say, "If I wanted money, I would either dig or beg for it; but to preach or marry for money, that be far from me." I commend you. However, though the love of money be a great evil, money itself, obtained in a fair and honourable way, is desirable upon many accounts, though not for its own sake. Meat, clothes, fire, and books, cannot easily be had without it; therefore, if these be necessary, money, which procures them, must be a necessary likewise. If things were otherwise than you represent them —if you were able to provide for a wife yourself—then I would say, Find a gracious girl (if she be not found already), whose person you like, whose temper you think will suit; and then, with your father and mother's consent (without which I think you would be unwilling to move), thank the Lord for her, marry her, and account her a valuable portion, though she should not have a shilling. But while you are without income or settlement, if you have thoughts of marriage, I hope they will be regulated by a due regard to consequences. They who set the least value upon money, have in some respects the most need of it. A generous mind will feel a thousand pangs in strait circumstances, which some unfeeling hearts would not be sensible of. You could perhaps endure hardships alone, yet it might pinch you to the very bone to see the person you love exposed to them. Besides, you might have a John, a Thomas,

and a William, and half a dozen more, to feed (for they must all eat); and how this could be done without a competency on one side or the other, or so much on both sides as will make a competency when united, I see not. Besides, you would be grieved not to find an occasional shilling in your pocket to bestow upon one or other of the Lord's poor, though you should be able to make some sort of a shift for those of your own house.

But is it not written, "The Lord will provide?" It is: but it is written again, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Hastily to plunge ourselves into difficulties upon a persuasion that he will find some way to extricate us, seems to me a species of tempting him.

Therefore I judge it is so far lawful for you to have a regard to money in looking out for a wife, that it would be wrong (that is, in other words, unlawful) for you to omit it, supposing you have a purpose of marrying in your present situation.

Many serious young women have a predilection in favour of a minister of the gospel; and I believe among such, one or more may be found as spiritual, as amiable, as suitable to make you a good wife, with a tolerable fortune to boot, as another who has not a penny. If you are not willing to trust your own judgment in the search, entreat the Lord to find her for you. He chose well for Isaac and Jacob; and you, as a believer, have warrant to commit your way to him, and many more express promises than they had for your encouragement. He knows your state, your wants, what you are at present, and what use he designs to make of you. Trust in him, and wait for him: prayer, and faith, and patience, are never disappointed. I commend you to his blessing and guidance. Remember us to all in your house.—I am, &c.

REV. J. NEWTON TO REV. MR. R.

July 6, 1776.

DEAR SIR,—I was abroad when your letter came, but employ the first post to thank you for your confidence. My prayers (when I can pray) you may be sure of; as to advice, I see not that the case requires much. Only be a quiet child,

and lie patiently at the Lord's feet. He is the best friend and manager in these matters, for he has a key to open every heart. . . . . I should not have taken Mr. Z.'s letter for a denial, as it seems you did. Considering the years of the parties, and other circumstances, a prudent parent could hardly say more, if he were inclined to favour your views. To me you seem to be in a tolerable fair way; but I know, in affairs of this kind, Mr. Self does not like suspense, but would willingly come to the point at once; but Mr. Faith (when he gets liberty to hold up his head) will own that, in order to make our temporal mercies wear well, and to give us a clearer sense of the hand that bestows them, a waiting and a praying time are very seasonable. Worldly people expect their schemes to run upon all-fours, as we say, and the objects of their wishes to drop into their mouths without difficulty; and if they succeed, they of course burn incense to their own drag, and say, "This was my doing;" but believers meet with rubs and disappointments, which convince them, that if they obtain anything, it is the Lord who must do it for them. For this reason I observe that he usually brings a death upon our prospects, even when it is his purpose to give us success in the issue. Thus we become more assured that we did not act in our own spirits, and have a more satisfactory view that his providence has been concerned in filling up the rivers and removing the mountains that were in our way. Then when he has given us our desire, how pleasant is it to look at it, and say, "This I got, not by my own sword and my own bow, but I wrestled for it in faith; I put it into the Lord's hand, and from his hand I received it!"

You have met with the story of one of our kings (if I mistake not) who wanted to send a nobleman abroad as his ambassador, and he desired to be excused on account of some affairs which required his presence at home; the king answered, "Do you take care of my business, and I will take care of yours." I would have you think the Lord says thus to you. You were sent into the world for a nobler end than to be pinned to a girl's apron-string; and yet, if the Lord sees it not good for you to be alone, he will provide you a help-meet. I

say, if he sees the marriage state best for you, he has the proper person *already* in his eye; and though she were in Peru or Nova-Zembla, he knows how to bring you together. In the meantime, go thou and preach the gospel. Watch in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of your ministry; and when other thoughts rise in your mind (for you have no door to shut them quite out), run with them to the throne of grace, and commit them to the Lord. Satan will perhaps try to force them upon you unreasonably and inordinately; but if he sees they drive you to prayer, he will probably desist, rather than be the occasion of doing you so much good. Believe, likewise, that as the Lord has the appointment of the person, so he fixes the time. His time is like the time of the tide; all the art and power of man can neither hasten nor retard it a moment: it must be waited for; nothing can be done without it; and when it comes, nothing can resist it. It is unbelief that talks of delays; faith knows that properly there can be no such thing. The only reason why the Lord seems to delay what he afterwards grants, is that the best hour is not yet come. I know you have been enabled to commit and resign your all to his disposal. You did well. May he help you to stand to the surrender! Sometimes he will put us to the trial whether we mean what we say. He takes his course in a way we did not expect; and then, alas! how often does the trial put us to shame! Presently there is an outcry raised in the soul against his management;—this is wrong, that unnecessary, the other has spoiled the whole plan; in short, all these things are against us. And when we go into the pulpit, and gravely tell the people how wise and how good he is, and preach submission to his will, not only as a duty, but a privilege; alas! how deceitful is the heart. Yet, since it is and will be so, it is necessary we should know it by experience. We have reason, however, to say he is good and wise; for he bears with our perverseness, and in the event shows us, that if he had listened to our murmurings, and taken the methods we would have prescribed to him, we should have been ruined indeed, and that he has been all the while doing us good in spite of ourselves.

If I judge right, you will find your way providentially opened more and more; and yet it is possible, that when you begin to think yourself sure, something may happen to put you in a panic again. But a believer, like a sailor, is not to be surprised if the wind changes, but to learn the art of suiting himself to all winds for the time; and though many a poor sailor is shipwrecked, the poor believer shall gain the port. Oh, it is good sailing with an infallible Pilot at the helm, who has the wind and weather at his command!

I have been much abroad, which of course puts things at sixes and sevens at home. If I did not love you well, I could not have spared so much of the only day I have had to myself for this fortnight past. But I was willing you should know that I think of you, and feel for you, if I cannot help you.

I have read Mr. ——'s book. Some things I think strongly argued; in some he has laid himself open to a blow, and I doubt not but he will have it. I expect answers, replies, rejoinders, &c., &c., and say with Leah, *Gad—a troop cometh.* How the wolf will grin to see the sheep and the shepherds biting and worrying one another! And well he may. He knows that contentions are a surer way to weaken the spirit of love, and stop the progress of the gospel, than his old stale method of fire and sword. Well, I trust we shall be of one heart and one mind when we get to heaven, at least.

Let who will fight, I trust neither water nor fire shall set you and me at variance. We unite in love to you. The Lord is gracious to us, &c.—I am, &c.

REV. J. NEWTON TO REV. MR. R.

—— 1776.

Dear Sir,—I do not often serve your letters so, but this last I burnt, believing you would like to have it out of danger of falling into improper hands. . . . .

Your pride, it seems, has received a fall, by meeting a repulse. I know Self does not like to be mortified in these affairs; but if you are made successful in wooing souls for

Christ, I hope that will console you for meeting a rebuff when only wooing for yourself. Besides, I would have you pluck up your spirits. I have two good old proverbs at your service: "There are as good fish in the sea as any that are brought out of it;" and, "If one won't, another will; or wherefore serves the market?" Perhaps all your difficulties have arisen from this, that you have not yet seen the right person; if so, you have reason to be thankful that the Lord would not let you take the wrong, though you unwittingly would have done it if you could. Where the right one lies hid I know not, but upon a supposition that it will be good for you to marry, I may venture to say,—

Ubi, ubi est, diu cellari non potest.

The Lord in his providence will disclose her, put her in your way, and give you to understand, "This is she." Then you will find your business go forward with wheels and wings, and have cause to say, His choice and time were better than your own.

Did I not tell you formerly, that if you would take care of His business he will take care of yours? I am of the same mind still. He will not suffer them who fear him and depend upon him to want anything that is truly good for them. In the meanwhile, I advise you to take a lodging as near as you can to Gethsemane, and to walk daily to Mount Golgotha, and borrow (which may be had for asking) that telescope which gives a prospect into the unseen world. A view of what is passing within the veil has a marvellous effect to compose our spirits with regard to the little things that are daily passing here. Praise the Lord, who has enabled you to fix your supreme affection upon him, who is alone the proper and suitable object of it, and from whom you cannot meet a denial or fear a change. He loved you first, and he will love you for ever; and if he be pleased to arise and smile upon you, you are in no more necessity of begging for happiness to the prettiest creature upon earth than of the light of a candle on midsummer noon.

Upon the whole, I pray and hope the Lord will sweeten

your cross, and either in kind or in kindness make you good amends. Wait, pray, and believe, and all shall be well. A cross we must have somewhere; and they who are favoured with health, plenty, peace, and a conscience sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, must have more causes for thankfulness than grief. Look round you, and take notice of the very severe afflictions which many of the Lord's own people are groaning under, and your trials will appear comparatively light. Our love to all friends.—I am, &c.

MR. BOSWELL TO MR. TEMPLE.

AUCHINLECK, *30th March* 1767.

MY DEAR TEMPLE,—What say you to my marrying? I intend, next autumn, to visit Miss Bosville in Yorkshire; but I fear, my lot being cast in Scotland, that beauty would not be content. She is, however, grave; I shall see. There is a young lady in the neighbourhood here who has an estate of her own, between two and three hundred a-year; just eighteen, a genteel person, an agreeable face, of a good family, sensible, good-tempered, cheerful, pious. You know my grand object is the ancient family of Auchinleck—a venerable and noble principle. How would it do to conclude an alliance with the neighbouring princess, and add her lands to our dominions? I should at once have a very pretty estate, a good house, and a sweet place. My father is very fond of her; it would make him perfectly happy. He gives me hints in this way: "I wish you had her; no bad scheme this; I think, a very good one." But I will not be in a hurry; there is plenty of time. I will take to myself the advice I wrote to you from Naples, and go to London a while before I marry. I am not yet quite well, but am in as good a way as can be expected. My fair neighbour was a ward of my father's; she sits in our seat at church in Edinburgh; she would take possession here most naturally. This is a superb place; we have the noblest natural beauties, and my father has made most extensive improvements. We look ten miles out upon our own dominions. We have an ex-

cellent new house. I am now writing in a library forty feet long. Come to us, my dearest friend; we will live like the most privileged spirits of antiquity.—I am ever, my dearest friend, most affectionately yours.

MR. BOSWELL TO MR. TEMPLE.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MR. TEMPLE, ON HIS TOUR TO AUCHINLECK AND ADAMTOWN.

SET out in the fly on Monday morning, and reach Glasgow by noon. Put up at Graham's, and ask for the horses bespoke by Mr. Boswell. Take tickets for the Friday's fly. Eat some cold victuals. Set out for Kingswell, to which you have good road; arrive there, get a guide to put you through the muir to Loudoun; from thence Thomas knows the road to Auchinleck, where the worthy overseer, Mr. James Bruce, will receive you. Be easy with him, and you will like him much; expect but moderate entertainment, as the family is not at home.

Tuesday.—See the house; look at the front; choose your room; advise as to pavilions. Have James Bruce to conduct you to the cab-house; to the old castle; to where I am to make the superb grotto; up the river to Broomsholm; the natural bridge; the grotto; the grotto-walk down to the Gothic bridge; anything else he pleases.

Wednesday.—Breakfast at 8; set out at 9; Thomas will bring you to Adamtown a little after 11. Send up your name. If possible, put up your horses there—they can have cut grass; if not, Thomas will take them to Mountain, a place a mile off, and come back and wait at dinner. Give Miss Blair my letter. Salute her and her mother; ask to walk. See the place fully; think what improvements should be made. Talk of my mare, the purse, the chocolate. Tell you are my very old and intimate friend. *Praise me for my good qualities—you know them; but talk also how odd, how inconstant, how impetuous, how much accustomed to women of intrigue. Ask gravely, Pray don't you imagine there is something of madness in that family? Talk of my various travels,—German princes,—Voltaire and Rousseau.*

Talk of my father; my strong desire to have my own house. Observe her well. See how amiable. Judge if she would be happy with your friend. Think of me as the great man at Adamtown,—quite classical too! Study the mother. Remember well what passes. Stay tea. At 6, order horses and go to New Mills, two miles from Loudoun; but if they press you to stay all night, do it. Be a man of as much ease as possible. Consider what a romantic expedition you are on; take notes; perhaps you now fix me for life.

Thursday.—Return to Glasgow from New Mills or from Adamtown. See High Church, New Church College, and particularly the paintings, and put half-a-crown into the box at the door. My friend, Mr. Robert Fowles, will show you all.

Friday.—Come back in the fly. Bring your portmanteau here. We shall settle where you are to lodge.

N.B.—You are to keep an exact account of your charges.

MR. BOSWELL TO MR. TEMPLE.

EDINBURGH, 11*th August* 1767.

MY DEAR TEMPLE,—I sincerely congratulate you on your marriage, which, from your manner of writing, I take to be a very good, comfortable situation. You have removed half my apprehensions, and I suppose I shall likewise by-and-by experience the agreeable union. But what can you say in defence of this heiress? Not a word from her since you were there! You carried her one letter from me, and I wrote her another a week after, neither of which has been answered. You must know that my present unhappy distemper, joined with a cold, brought on a most terrible fever, and I was for several days in a most alarming situation. I am not yet up, though I am in a fair way of recovery from every evil. Well, but to return. I wrote Miss Blair on Wednesday the 5th, that I was afraid Mr. Temple had told her my faults too honestly, so that she was mistaken in having too good an opinion of me; that however she had punished me (only think of that, Temple!) too much; that I felt it the more, because I had been for some

days confined to my bed by a féverish disorder, and had been dreaming a great deal of her.

Now, my dear friend, suppose what you please; suppose her affections changed, as those of women too often are; suppose her offended at my Spanish stateliness; suppose her to have resolved to be more reserved and coy in order to make me more in love; nay, suppose her betrothed to that man of copper, the formal Nabob,—still, politeness obliged her to give me some answer or other; yet it is now four posts since that answer might have come. Is it not strange, after such frankness and affability? What shall I think? As I am quite in the dark, I will take no resolution against her till you advise me; for I still cannot help thinking she is the best woman to be my wife I have ever seen. Perhaps her mysterious conduct may be quite cleared up. . . . . I am a strange man, but ever your most sincere friend.

MR. BOSWELL TO MR. TEMPLE.

EDINBURGH, *25th August* 1767.

MY DEAR TEMPLE,—Marriage is like to lose me a friend; for I have not had a line from you for near a fortnight, although my last letter was full of anxiety with regard to my amiable Miss B. What can have occasioned so long a silence? I conclude, because you are not able to make an apology for the conduct of the lady for whom you are a kind of surety. I will therefore relieve you from this dilemma, by informing you that she has made an apology herself. On Monday se'nnight I had the pleasure to receive a most agreeable letter from her, in which she told me that my letter to her had lain eight days at the post-house at Ayr, which was the occasion of her seeming neglect. You see, my friend, how appearances are often very deceitful. This never occurred either to you or me. I have refrained from communicating this to you from a curiosity to see how you would endeavour to excuse her conduct; but since I have waited so long in vain, I now make you as easy as myself. I would send you the letter, but it says so many fine

things of you, that I will not give you so much pleasure till I hear from you again.—I ever am, my dear Temple, your most faithful friend.

MR. BOSWELL TO MR. TEMPLE.

EDINBURGH, *28th August* 1767.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It seems you and I, like the magnetic needles of the two friends, have both turned towards each other at the same time. You would receive, the day before yesterday, a letter from me complaining of your long silence; and I have, by the same post, received a very kind one from you.

Are you not happy to find that all is well between the Prince of Auchinleck and his fair neighbouring Princess? In short, sir, I am one of the most fortunate men in the world. As Miss Blair is my great object at present, and you are a principal minister in forwarding the alliance, I enclose you the latest papers on the subject. You will find the letter I wrote her when ill, where you will see a Scots word *roving*, from the French *rever*, as if to dream awake. I put it down as a good English word, not having looked in Johnson. You will next find the lady's answer; then a long letter from me, which required an extraordinary degree of good sense and temper to answer it with an agreeable propriety; then her answer, which exceeds my highest expectations. Read these papers in their order, and let me have your Excellency's opinion. Am I not now as well as I can be? What condescension! what a desire to please! She studies my disposition, and resolves to be cautious, &c. Adorable woman! Don't you think I had better not write again till I see her? I shall go west in a fortnight; but I can hardly restrain myself from writing to her in transport. I will go to Adamtown, and stay a week. I will have no disguise; we shall see each other fairly. We are both independent; we have no temptation to marry but to make each other happy. Let us be sure if that would be the consequence. Was it not very good in my worthy father to visit my mistress in my absence? I have thanked him for it, and

begged he may send his chaise for Mrs. Blair and her to come and stay some days with him. I am recovering well, and my spirits are admirable. I shall send you two "Dorandos" by the carrier; he does not go till Thursday. Honest Johnston, who sits by me, sends you his most sincere congratulations. Pray make my best compliments to Mrs. Temple.—I ever am, dear Temple, your most affectionate friend.

MR. BOSWELL TO MR. TEMPLE.

ADAMTOWN, *5th November* 1767.

MY DEAR TEMPLE,—The pleasure of your countenance, in reading the date of this letter, is before me at this moment. I imagine it cannot be less than I felt glowing in my eyes when I received the last of your letters, with the elegant, and, I am fully persuaded, sincere commendations of my "Corsican Journal." In short, I am sitting in the room with my Princess, who is at this moment a finer woman than ever she appeared to me before. But, my valuable friend, be not too certain of your Boswell's felicity, for indeed he has little of it at present. You must know that Miss Blair's silence, which I mentioned to you, was a silence notwithstanding of my having written three letters to her, and—(here supper interrupted me; the rest is written in my own room, the same where you slept)—when a former quarrel should have taught her that she had a lover of an anxious temper. For ten days I was in a fever, but at last I broke the enchantment. However, I would not be too sullen in my pride; I wrote to her from Auchinleck, and *wished her joy*, &c. She answered me, with the same ease as ever, that I had no occasion. I then wrote her a strange, Sultanish letter, very cold and very formal, and did not go to see her for near three weeks. At last I am here, and our meeting has been such as you paint in your last but one. I have been here one night; she insisted on my staying another. I am dressed in green and gold. I have my chaise, *in which I sit alone, like Mr. Gray*, and Thomas rides by me in a claret-coloured suit with a silver-laced hat. But the Princess and I

have not yet made up our quarrel; she talks lightly of it. I am resolved to have a serious conversation with her to-morrow morning. If she can still remain indifferent as to what has given me much pain, she is not the woman I thought her, and from to-morrow morning shall I be severed from her as a lover. I shall just bring myself, I hope, to a good, easy tranquillity. If she feels as I wish her to do, I shall adore her while my blood is warm. You shall hear fully from Auchinleck.

We have talked a great deal of you. She has made me laugh heartily with her ideas of you before you arrived,—an old friend, an English clergyman. She imagined she was to see a fat man, with a large white wig,—a man something like Mr. Whitefield. Upon honour, she said so; but she and Mrs. Blair were quite charmed with the young parson, with his neat black periwig and his polite address. They send you a thousand compliments.—With my best compliments to Mrs. Temple, I am ever yours.

MR. BOSWELL TO MR. TEMPLE.

AUCHINLECK, Sunday, *8th Nov.* 1767.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I wrote you from Adamtown, and told you how it was with the Princess and me. Next morning I told her that I had complained to you that she would not make up our last quarrel; but she did not appear in the least inclined to own herself in the wrong. I confess that, between pride and love, I was unable to speak to her but in a very awkward manner. I came home on Friday; yesterday I was extremely uneasy. That I might give her a fair opportunity, I sent her a letter, of which I enclose you a copy. Could the proud Boswell say more than you will see there? In the evening I got her answer. It was written with an art and indifference astonishing from so young a lady: "I have not yet found out that I was to blame. If you have been uneasy on my account, I am indeed sorry for it; I should be sorry to give any person uneasiness, far more one whose cousin and friend I shall always be." She refused sending me the lock,

"because (in the eyes of the world) it is improper;" and she says very cool things upon that head. What think you of such a return to a letter full of warmth and admiration? In short, Temple, she is cunning, and sees my weakness. But I now see her, and though I cannot but suffer severely, I from this moment resolve to think no more of her. I send you the copy of a note which goes to her to-morrow morning. Wish me joy, my good friend, of having discovered the snake before it was too late. I should have been ruined had I made such a woman my wife. Luckily for me, a neighbour who came to Auchinleck last night told me that he had heard three people at Ayr agree in abusing her as a jilt. What a risk have I run! However, as there is still a possibility that all this may be mistake and malice, I shall behave to her in a very respectful manner, and shall never say a word against her but to you. After this, I shall be upon my guard against ever indulging the least fondness for a Scots lass; I am a soul of a more Southern frame. I may perhaps be fortunate enough to find an Englishwoman who will be sensible of my merit, and will study to please my singular humour. By what you write of Mrs. Temple, I wish I had such a wife; though indeed your temper is so much better than mine, that perhaps she and I would have quarrelled before this time, had we been married when you were. Love is a perfect fever of the mind. I question if any man has been more tormented with it than myself. Even at this moment, as I write, my heart is torn by vexing thoughts of this fine Princess of ours; but I may take comfort, since I have so often recovered.

You are too hard upon me in judging of the differences between father and son. I never wrote to him that I would take no pleasure in country affairs till he was dead. I said, indeed, that I should hardly give my mind to them till I had a place of my own; and I added, "Auchinleck will be well taken care of while you live, and you may be assured that it shall not be neglected when you are gone." You see how a temper anyhow out of tune can interpret. Perhaps I do the same by the Princess; however, I promise you I shall be conscientious in doing a great deal to make my worthy father

easy and happy. He and I are at present very well; it is merely a jarring of temper which occasions our difficulties.

One word more of the Princess. The two last days I was with her she was more engaging than you can conceive. She and I had the most agreeable conversation together, and she assured me she was not going to be married to any other man; and yet, Temple, with what a cold reserve does she behave! Let her go!...

Ah! my friend, shall I have Miss Bosville? You see I am the old man. I am much obliged to you for your remarks on my "Corsican Journal." Please return the letters enclosed. My compliments to Mrs. Temple.—Ever yours.

MR. BOSWELL TO MR. TEMPLE.

STRATHAVEN, *9th November* 1767.

MY EVER DEAR TEMPLE,—Having left Auchinleck this morning in a hurry, I brought my letters to you in my pocket so far on the road; and, as your kind packet of the 30th October has overtaken me, I have opened one of my letters, and add a few lines. ..... the madness, of which I have a strong degree in my composition, is at present so heightened by love, that I am absolutely deprived of judgment. How could I possibly be in a rage at the Princess's last letter? I now sit calmly in this village, and read it with delight. What could she do more? Like you, she thought I could not expect to hear from her when she expected me every day at Adamtown; therefore she was not to blame, and she had too much spirit to own herself in the wrong when she was conscious of no fault. Yet how amiably does she comply with my request, and tell me that she is sorry that I have been uneasy on her account! "I shall always be a cousin and a friend. I hope you will not look upon this as a new quarrel." I love her, Temple, with my whole heart; I am entirely in her power. Were she a woman of such a temper as I have, how might she fret against me! "He comes to Auchinleck, and is near three weeks without coming to see me. When he

comes, not a tender word, not one expression of a lover. How can I allow my affections to fix on such a man?" She has defended herself very well in refusing me the lock; I shall get it from her at Edinburgh. Oh, my friend, be watchful over me in this precious period! If she does not write to me, she is certainly unfeeling, and I must at any price preserve my own character; if she writes as I can imagine, I will consecrate myself to her for ever. I must have her to learn the harpsichord and French; she shall be one of the first women in the island. But let me take care; I know not what is in store. Do you think it possible she can have any scheme of marrying another? I will not suspect her..... One great fault of mine is talking at random; I will guard against it. My feudal Seigneurs are printed off in the account. Adieu, my best friend! I thank God for such a friend.—Ever yours.

MR. BOSWELL TO MR. TEMPLE.

EDINBURGH, 16*th December* 1767.

MY DEAR TEMPLE,—You have reason to blame me for a too long silence, after having received all your friendly remarks on my "Journal," and while you was uncertain as to my negotiations with the Princess. I am sincerely obliged to you for polishing my Corsican monument; it is now complete, and I would fain hope it will do both the brave islanders and myself a great deal of honour. As to the Princess, I sent the letter which you returned. She did not write, but bid her aunt tell me that she and I were as good friends as ever. This did not satisfy me, and for several weeks did I strive to break my chain; at last she came to town, and I have had a long conversation with her. She assured me she did not believe me serious, or that I was uneasy, and that it was my own fault if ever she and I quarrelled; I in short adored her, and was convinced she was not to blame. I told her that henceforth she should entertain no doubt that I sincerely loved her; and, Temple, I ventured to seize her hand! She is really the finest woman to me I ever saw. I am just now going to meet her at

the concert, after which I sup with her at Lord Kaimes's, along with her cousin, the beautiful young Duchess of Gordon; I am therefore in a hurry and a flutter, and must break off, but in a day or two I shall write you fully. In the meantime, my friend, wish me joy of my present peace of mind, and make my compliments to the woman to whom I see you owe a great deal. Adieu, my best friend!—Ever yours.

MR. BOSWELL TO MR. TEMPLE.

EDINBURGH, *24th December* 1767.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,—In my last I told you that, after I had resolved to give up with the Princess, I resolved first to see her. I was so lucky as to have a very agreeable interview, and was convinced by her that she was not to blame. This happened on a Thursday; that evening her cousin and most intimate friend, the Duchess of Gordon, came to town. Next day I was at the concert with them, and afterwards supped at Lord Kaimes's. The Princess appeared distant and reserved; I could hardly believe that it was the same woman with whom I had been quite easy the day before. I was then uneasy. Next evening I was at the Play with them; it was "Othello." I sat close behind the Princess, and at the most affecting scenes I pressed my hand upon her waist. She was in tears, and rather leaned to me. The jealous Moor described my very soul. I often spoke to her of the torment she saw before her; still I thought her distant, and still I felt uneasy. On Sunday the Duchess went away. I met the Princess at church; she was distant as before. I passed the evening at her aunt's, where I met a cousin of my Princess, a young lady of Glasgow, who had been with us at Adamtown. She told me she had something to communicate, and she then said my behaviour to the Princess was such, that Mrs. B. and her daughter did not know how to behave to me; that it was not honourable to engage a young lady's affections while I kept myself free; in short, the good cousin persuaded me that the Princess had formed an attachment for me, and she assured

me the Nabob had been refused. On Monday forenoon I waited on Miss B. I found her alone, and she did not seem distant. I told her that I was most sincerely in love with her, and that I only dreaded those faults which I had acknowledged to her. I asked her seriously if she now believed me in earnest. She said she did. I then asked her to be candid and fair, as I had been with her, and to tell me if she had any particular liking for me. What think you, Temple, was her answer? "No; I really have no particular liking for you; I like many people as well as you." Temple, you must have it in the genuine dialogue.

Boswell. Do you indeed? Well, I cannot help it; I am obliged to you for telling me so in time. I am sorry for it.

Princess. I like Jeany Maxwell [Duchess of Gordon] better than you.

B. Very well; but do you like no man better than me?

P. No.

B. Is it possible that you may like me better than other men?

P. I don't know what is possible.

(By this time I had risen and placed myself by her, and was in real agitation.)

B. I'll tell you what, my dear Miss Blair, I love you so much that I am very unhappy if you cannot love me. I must, if possible, endeavour to forget you. What would you have me do?

P. I really don't know what you should do.

B. It is certainly possible that you may love me; and if you shall ever do so, I shall be the happiest man in the world. Will you make a fair bargain with me? If you should happen to love me, will you own it?

P. Yes.

B. And if you should happen to love another, will you tell me immediately, and help me to make myself easy?

P. Yes, I will.

B. Well, you are very good (often squeezing and kissing her fine hand, while she looked at me with those beautiful black eyes).

P. I may tell you, as a cousin, what I would not tell to another man.

B. You may indeed. You are very fond of Auchinleck, that is one good circumstance.

P. I confess I am. I wish I liked you as well as I do Auchinleck.

B. I have told you how fond I am of you; but unless you like me sincerely, I have too much spirit to ask you to live with me, as I know that you do not like me. If I could have you this moment for my wife, I would not.

P. I should not like to put myself in your offer though.

B. Remember, you are both my cousin and my mistress; you must make me suffer as little as possible, as it may happen that I may engage your affections. I should think myself a most dishonourable man if I were not now in earnest; and, remember, I depend upon your sincerity; and whatever happens, you and I shall never have another quarrel.

P. Never.

B. And I may come and see you as much as I please?

P. Yes.

My worthy friend, what sort of a scene was this? It was most curious. She said she would submit to her husband in most things. She said that to see one loving her would go far to make her love that person; but she would not talk anyhow positively, for she never had felt the uneasy anxiety of love. We were an hour and a half together, and seemed pleased all the time. I think she behaved with spirit and propriety. I admire her more than ever. She intended to go to her aunt's, twelve miles from town, next day: her jaunt was put off for some days. Yesterday I saw her again; I was easy and cheerful, and just endeavoured to make myself agreeable.

This forenoon I was again with her. I told her how uneasy I was that she should be three weeks absent. She said I might amuse myself well enough. She seemed quite indifferent. I was growing angry again, but I recollected how she had candidly told me that she had no particular liking for me.

Temple, where am I now? What is the meaning of this? I drank tea with her this afternoon, and sat near four hours

with her mother and her. Our conversation turned all on the manner in which two people might live. She has the justest ideas. She said she knew me now; she could laugh me out of my ill-humour; she could give Lord Auchinleck a lesson how to manage me. Temple, what does the girl mean? We talked a good deal of you: you are a prodigious favourite. Now, my worthy friend, assist me. You know my strange temper and impetuous disposition; shall I boldly shake her off, as I fear I cannot be patient and moderate? or am I not bound in honour to suffer some time, and watch her heart? How long must I suffer? how must I do? When she comes back, shall I affect any indifference, to try her? or shall I rather endeavour to inspire her with my flame? Is it not below me to be made uneasy by her? or may I not be a philosopher, and, without uneasiness, take her if she likes me, and if not, let her alone? During her absence, I have time to get a return from you. It is certainly possible that all she has said may be literally true; but is not her indifference a real fault? Consult Mrs. Temple, and advise me. Amidst all this love, I have been wild as ever.... Trust me in time coming; I give you my word of honour, Temple: I have nothing else to save me....

Come, why do I allow myself to be uneasy for a Scots lass? Rouse me, my friend! Kate has not fire enough; she does not know the value of her lover! If on her return she still remains cold, she does not deserve me. I will not quarrel with her: she cannot help her defects: but I will break my enchanting fetters. To-morrow I shall be happy with my devotions. I shall think of you, and wish to be at Mamhead. Could you assist me to keep up my real dignity among the illiberal race of Scotch lawyers. Adieu, my dearest friend! My best compliments to your amiable spouse.

MR. BOSWELL TO MR. TEMPLE.

EDINBURGH, *8th February* 1768.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—All is over between Miss Blair and me. I have delayed writing till I could give you some final account.

About a fortnight after she went to the country, a report went that she was going to be married to Sir Alexander Gilmour, Member of Parliament for the county of Mid-Lothian, a young man about thirty, who has £1600 a-year of estate, was formerly an officer in the Guards, and is now one of the clerks of the Board of Green Cloth, £1000 a-year—in short, a noble match, though a man of expense, and obliged to lead a London life. After the fair agreement between her and me, which I gave you fully in my last, I had a title to know the truth. I wrote to her seriously, and told her if she did not write me an answer I should believe the report to be true. After three days I concluded, from her silence, that she was at least engaged. I endeavoured to laugh off my passion, and I got Sir Alexander Gilmour to frank a letter to her, which I wrote in a pleasant strain, and amused myself with the whim; still, however, I was not absolutely certain, as her conduct has been so prudent all along. At last she comes to town; and who comes too, but my old rival, the Nabob! I got acquainted with Mr. Fullarton, and he and I joked a good deal about our heiress. Last night he proposed that he and I should go together and pay her a visit for the first time after her return from the country. Accordingly we went, and I give you my word, Temple, it was a curious scene. However, the Princess behaved exceedingly well, though with a reserve more than ordinary. When we left her we both exclaimed, ". . . . . a fine woman!" I began to like the Nabob much; so I said to him, "I do believe, Mr. Fullarton, you and I are in the same situation here; is it possible to be upon honour, and generous, in an affair of this kind?" We agreed it was. Each then declared he was serious in his love for Miss B; each protested he never before believed the other in earnest. We agreed to deal by one another in a fair and candid manner. I carried him to sup at a lady's, a cousin of mine, where we stayed till half an hour past eleven; we then went to a tavern, and the good old claret was set before us. He told me that he had been most assiduous in attending Miss Blair, but she never gave him the least encouragement, and declared he was convinced she loved me as much as a woman could love a man. With equal hon-

esty I told all that had passed between her and me, and your observation on the wary mother. "What!" said he, "did Temple say so? If he had lived twenty years in the country with them he could not have said a better thing." I then told him Dempster's humorous saying,—that all Miss B.'s connections were in an absolute confederacy to lay hold of every man who has a thousand a-year; and how I called their system a *salmon-fishing*. "You have hit it," said he; "we're all kept in play; but I am positive you are the fish, and Sir Alexander is only a mock salmon, to force you to jump more expeditiously at the bait." We sat till two this morning; we gave our words as men of honour, that we would be honest to each other, so that neither should suffer needlessly; and, to satisfy ourselves of our real situation, we gave our words that we should both ask her this morning, and I should go first. Could there be anything better than this? The Nabob talked to me with the warmth of the Indies, and professed the greatest pleasure on being acquainted with me.

Well, Temple, I went this morning; and she made tea to me alone. I then asked her seriously if she was to be married to Sir Alexander. She said it was odd to believe everything people said, and why did I put such a question, &c. I said that she knew very well that I was much in love with her, and that if I had any chance I would take a good deal of trouble to make myself agreeable to her. She said I need not take the trouble, and I must not be angry, for she thought it best to tell me honestly. "What, then," said I; "have I no chance?" "No," said she. I asked her to say so upon her word and honour. She fairly repeated the words. So I think, Temple, I had enough.

She would not tell me whether she was engaged to the knight: she said she would not satisfy an idle curiosity. But I own I had no doubt of it. What amazed me was, that she and I were as easy and as good friends as ever. I told her, I have great animal spirits, and bear it wonderfully well. But this is really hard: I am thrown upon the wide world again; I don't know what will become of me.

Before dinner the Nabob and I met, and he told me that he

went, and in the most serious and submissive manner begged to know if she was engaged. She would give him no satisfaction, and treated him with a degree of coldness that overpowered him quite, poor man!

Such is the history of the lovers of this cruel Princess, who certainly is a lucky woman to have had a sovereign sway over so many admirers. I have endeavoured to make merry on my misfortune.

A CRAMBO SONG ON LOSING MY MISTRESS.

Although I be an honest laird,
In person rather strong and brawny,
For me the heiress never cared,
For she would have the knight, Sir Sawney.

And when, with ardent vows, I swore
Loud as Sir Jonathan Trelawny,
The heiress showed me to the door,
And said she'd have the knight, Sir Sawney.

She told me, with a scornful look,
I was as ugly as a tawny;
For she a better fish could hook—
The rich and gallant knight, Sir Sawney.

N.B. I can find no more rhymes to Sawney.

Now that all is over, I see many faults in her which I did not see before. Do you not think she has not feeling enough, nor that ingenuous spirit which your friend requires? The Nabob and many other people are still of opinion that she has not made sure of Sir Sawney, and that all this may be *finesse;* but I cannot suspect so young a creature of so much artifice; and whatever may be in it, I am honourably off; and you may wonder at it, but I assure you I am very easy and cheerful. I am, however, resolved to look out for a good wife, either here or in England. I intend to be in London in March: my address will be at Mr. Dilly's, bookseller; but I expect to hear from you before I set out, which will not be till the 14th of March. I rejoice to hear that Mrs. Temple is in a good way; my best wishes ever attend you and her.—I am, your most affectionate friend.

Feb. 11.—I have allowed my letter to lie by till this day. The heiress is a good Scot's lass, but I must have an Englishwoman. My mind is now twice as enlarged as it has been for some months. You cannot say how fine a woman I may marry;—perhaps a Howard, or some other of the noblest in the kingdom.

PART IX.

Invitations, &c.

I.—FORMAL INVITATIONS.

I. INVITATION.

Mr. and Mrs. Anderson request the honour of Mr. and Mrs. Fortescue's company at dinner on Tuesday the 22nd, at six o'clock.

WESTBROOK HALL,
Tuesday, September 8th.

REPLY—ACCEPTING.

Mr. and Mrs. Fortescue will have the honour of waiting on Mr. and Mrs. Anderson on Tuesday the 22nd.

EASTCLIFF,
Wednesday, September 9th.

REPLY—DECLINING.

Mr. and Mrs. Fortescue regret that a previous engagement will prevent their having the honour of waiting on Mr. and Mrs. Anderson on Tuesday the 22nd.

EASTCLIFF,
Wednesday, September 9th.

II. INVITATION.

Lady Clifford requests the pleasure of Mrs. and the Misses Mansfield's company on the evening of Wednesday the 19th, at nine o'clock.

10 KING STREET,
Thursday, 6th.

REPLY—ACCEPTING.

Mrs. and the Misses Mansfield have much pleasure in accepting Lady Clifford's invitation for the evening of Wednesday the 19th.

4 QUEEN STREET,
Friday, 7th.

III. INVITATION.

Captain and Mrs. Thornton request the pleasure of Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Montague's company at dinner on Thursday the 16th, at six o'clock.

NORWOOD,
Monday, 13th.

REPLY—ACCEPTING.

Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Montague have much pleasure in accepting Captain and Mrs. Thornton's kind invitation for Thursday the 16th.

WESTON,
Tuesday Morning.

REPLY—DECLINING.

Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Montague regret that a previous engagement prevents their having the pleasure of accepting Captain and Mrs. Thornton's kind invitation for Thursday the 16th.

WESTON,
Tuesday Morning.

II.—LESS FORMAL.

I. INVITATION.

My Dear Mrs. Morton,—Will you and Mr. Morton favour us with your company at dinner on Tuesday the 11th at six o'clock?—Yours sincerely, Anne Mason.

Milford,
Friday Morning.

REPLY—ACCEPTING.

My Dear Mrs. Mason,—It will give Mr. Morton and me much pleasure to be with you on Tuesday at six.—Yours truly, Helen Morton.

Clifton Villa,
Saturday.

II. INVITATION.

Dear Mr. Campbell,—It will give Mr. Mason and me much pleasure if you will dine with us on Tuesday the 11th. Our hour is six.—Yours truly, Anne Mason.

Milford,
Friday Morning.

REPLY—DECLINING.

Dear Mrs. Mason,—I regret that I am unable to accept your kind invitation, as I have to leave town this afternoon, and will not be back for a week.—Yours truly,

Henry Campbell.

III.—FAMILIAR INVITATIONS.

COWPER TO LADY HESKETH.

AN INVITATION TO AN INTIMATE FRIEND.

My Dear,—April is come, and May cannot be very far off. In May, you know, we are to see you here. Remember this. I know you will come if it be possible, because you assured me

that nothing but impossibility should prevent you. Need I add that we shall both be happy to receive you? Certainly I need not, did not the custom established in all such cases require it. For it is true, and doubtless you already know it, that we are never so comfortable as when you are with us. Mrs. Unwin heartily subscribes to this, and sends you her best remembrances. She is still lame, but in a way of amendment,—that is to say, mends very slowly.

Believe me, as I truly am, thine.

REV. SYDNEY SMITH TO LORD JEFFREY.

DEAR JEFFREY,—Though Mrs. Jeffrey will not let you come for any length of time, will she not permit you to come for two days, if we give bond to send you back on Wednesday? Pray reply to this interrogation by return of post, and in the affirmative if you can.

IV.—DECLINING AN INVITATION.

FAMILIAR.

COWPER TO THE REV. WALTER BAGOT.

WESTON, *June* 7, 1792.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I shall not have opportunity to say much, but lest I should seem slow to acknowledge your last very kind letter, I will say the little that I can.

In the first place I thank you for your most cordial invitation of Mrs. Unwin and myself to Blithfield; but, alas! were there no other impediment, such a one has occurred as of itself makes all journeying at this time, and for some time to come, impracticable. Mrs. Unwin has been seized since I received your letter with a disorder that for several days deprived her entirely of the use of her right side, and made her speech so indistinct as to be almost unintelligible. She is at present somewhat recovered, and daily, I hope, regains a little strength; but is still so feeble that I have no hope of her complete restoration even to the small share of health she enjoyed before,

in less than many weeks; perhaps if I say months I shall not exceed the occasion. Her illness is a repetition of one with which she was attacked in last December, and she still felt in a degree the effects of the first when the second affliction found her. As to myself, I have suffered nearly the same disability in mind on the occasion, as she in body. All power to study, all thoughts both of Homer and Milton are driven to a distance, and I can do nothing at present but watch my poor patient, and administer to her, as I do every day, the electrical operation. It seems to be of use in the moment; and she can always articulate better for a time after it is over. But this perceptible benefit is not of very long duration; yet it is reasonable to hope that a remedy in appearance of so much present efficacy, may at length, and by frequent repetition, have effects more lasting.

Adieu, my dear friend; with the poor invalid's best compliments, I remain sincerely yours.

REV. SYDNEY SMITH TO LADY GREY.

November 29th, 1810.

Dear Lady Grey,—Thank you very kindly for your obliging invitation to me and Mrs. Smith. Nothing would give Mrs. Sydney more pleasure than to make your acquaintance, and I am sure you would not find her unworthy of it; but the care of her young family, and the certain conviction, if she leaves them for a day, that they are all dead, necessarily confines her a good deal at home. Some lucky chance may, however, enable her hereafter to pay her respects to you; and she will, I am sure, avail herself of it with great pleasure.

I remain, dear Lady Grey, very sincerely and respectfully yours.

REV. SYDNEY SMITH TO LORD JEFFREY.

—— 1818.

My Dear Jeffrey,—I am truly obliged by your kindness in inviting Mrs. Sydney and me to come and see you. I know

nothing that would give us more pleasure; but poverty, agriculture, children, clerical confinement, all conspire to put such a pleasure out of my reach. The only holiday I get in the year carries me naturally towards London, to meet my father and brother; however, I will not despair. I mention these things explicitly now, that there may be no occasion to trouble you any more; and this, I daresay you will agree with me, is the better plan.

I have received, and nearly read, Georgel.—Ever, my dear friend, yours affectionately.

REV. SYDNEY SMITH TO MRS. MURCHISON.

June 8th, 1837.

ENGAGED, my dear madam, to Sir George Philips, or should have been too happy;—will come in the evening, if possible.

I am surprised that an archbishop, living in an alluvial country, should be at your table. Are there no bishops among the Silurian rocks?—Ever yours.

CHARLOTTE BRONTE TO MRS. GASKELL.

December 18th, 1850.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,—Miss ——'s kindness and yours is such that I am placed in the dilemma of not knowing how adequately to express my sense of it. *This* I know, however, very well—that if I *could* go and be with you for a week or two in such a quiet south-country house, and with such kind people as you describe, I should like it much. I find the proposal marvellously to my taste; it is the pleasantest, gentlest, sweetest temptation possible; but delectable as it is, its solicitations are by no means to be yielded to without the sanction of reason, and therefore I desire for the present to be silent, and to stand back till I have been to Miss Martineau's, and returned home, and considered well whether it is a scheme as right as agreeable.

Meantime, the mere thought does me good.

DIRECTIONS

FOR

Addressing Persons of all Ranks.

To the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, Most gracious Sovereign, May it please your Majesty.

To his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, Sir, May it please your Royal Highness.

In the same manner to the rest of the Royal Family.

TO THE NOBILITY.

To his Grace the Duke of S. My Lord Duke; or, May it please your Grace; or, Your Grace.

To the Most Noble the Marquis of B. My Lord Marquis, Your Lordship.

To the Right Honourable the Earl of B. My Lord, Your Lordship.

To the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount D. My Lord, Your Lordship.

To the Right Hon. the Lord F. My Lord, Your Lordship.

The Ladies are addressed according to the rank of their Husbands.

Widows of Noblemen are addressed in the same style, the word *Dowager* being added. To the Most Noble the Dowager Marchioness of, &c.

The Sons of Dukes, Marquises, and the eldest Sons of Earls, have, by the courtesy of England, the title of Lord and Right Honourable; and the title of Lady is given to their Daughters.

The younger Sons of Earls, and Sons of Viscounts and Barons, are styled Esquires, and Honourable, and all their Daughters Honourable.

The title of Honourable is likewise conferred on such persons as have the Queen's Commission, and upon those Gentlemen who enjoy places of trust and honour.

The title of Right Honourable is given to no Commoner, excepting those who are Members of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, and the three Lord Mayors of London, York, and Dublin, and the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, during the time they are in office.

TO THE PARLIAMENT.

To the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled, My Lords, or, May it please your Lordships.

To the Right Honourable the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled, Gentlemen, or, May it please your Honours.

To the Right Hon. C. W. C., Speaker of the House of Commons—who is generally one of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council—Sir.

TO THE CLERGY.

To the Most Reverend the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, My Lord, or, Your Grace.

To the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of S., My Lord.

To the Very Rev. the Dean of C., or Archdeacon, or Chancellor of D., or Prebendary, &c., Mr. Dean, Reverend Sir, &c.

All Rectors, Vicars, Curates, Lecturers, and Clergymen of other inferior denominations, are styled Reverend.

TO THE OFFICERS OF HER MAJESTY'S HOUSEHOLD.

They are for the most part addressed according to their rank and quality, though sometimes agreeably to the nature of their office; as, My Lord Steward, My Lord Chamberlain, Mr. Vice-Chamberlain, &c.; and in all superscriptions of letters which relate to gentlemen's employments, their style of Office should never be omitted; and if they have more offices than one, you need mention only the highest.

TO THE OFFICERS OF THE ARMY AND NAVY.

In the Army all Noblemen are styled according to their rank, to which is added their employ.

To the Hon. A. B., Esq., Lieutenant-General, Major-General, Brigadier-General of Her Majesty's Forces, Sir, Your Honour.

To the Right Honourable the E. of S., Captain of Her Majesty's First Troop of Horse Guards, Band of Gentlemen-Pensioners, Band of Yeomen of the Guards, &c., My Lord, Your Lordship.

All Colonels are styled Honourable; all inferior Officers should have the name of their employment set first: as, for example, to Major W. C., to Captain T. B., &c.

In the Navy, all Admirals are styled Honourable, and Noblemen according to quality and office. The other Officers as in the Army.

TO AMBASSADORS, SECRETARIES, AND CONSULS.

All Ambassadors have the title of Excellency added to their quality, as have also Plenipotentiaries, Foreign Governors, and the Lord Lieutenant and Lord Justices of Ireland.

To his Excellency Sir B. C., Baronet, Her Britannic Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary, Minister and Plenipotentiary to the Ottoman Porte, Sir, Your Excellency.

To his Excellency E. F., Esq., Ambassador to Her Most Christian Majesty, Sir, or, Your Excellency.

To his Excellency the Baron de A., His Prussian Majesty's Resident at the Court of Great Britain, Sir, Your Excellency.

To Seignior W. G., Secretary from the Republic of Venice, Sir.

To G. D., Esq., Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Smyrna, Sir.

TO THE JUDGES AND LAWYERS.

All the Judges, if Privy Councillors, are styled Right Honourable; as for instance:—

To the Right Honourable A. B., Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain, My Lord, Your Lordship.

To the Right Honourable P. V., Master of the Rolls, Sir, Your Honour.

To the Right Hon. Sir G. L., Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, or of the Common Pleas, My Lord, Your Lordship.

To the Honourable A. B., Lord Chief Baron, Sir, or, May it please you, Sir.

To the Right Hon. A. D., Esq., one of the Justices, or to Judge M., Sir, or, May it please you, Sir.

To Sir R. D., Her Majesty's Attorney, Solicitor, or Advocate-General, Sir.

All others in the Law, according to their offices, and rank they bear, every Barrister having the title of Esquire given him.

TO THE LIEUTENANCY AND MAGISTRACY.

To the Right Honourable G., Earl of C., Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of the County of Durham, My Lord, Your Lordship.

To the Right Honourable T. S., Esq., Lord Mayor of the City of London, My Lord, Your Lordship.

All Gentlemen in the Commission of the Peace have the title of Esquire and Worshipful, as have also all Sheriffs and Recorders.

The Aldermen and Recorders of London are styled Right Worshipful, as are all Mayors of Corporations, except Lord Mayors.

To A. B., Esq., High Sheriff of the County of York, Sir, Your Worship.

To the Right Worshipful W. D., Esq., Alderman of Tower Ward, London, Sir, Your Worship.

To the Right Honourable J. A., Recorder of the City of London, Sir, Your Worship.

The Governors of Hospitals, Colleges, &c., which consist of Magistrates, or have any such among them, are styled Right Worshipful, or Worshipful, as their titles allow.

TO THE GOVERNORS OF THE CROWN.

To his Excellency the Duke of R., Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, My Lord, Your Excellency.

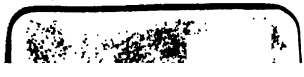
To the Right Honourable Lord N., Governor of Dover Castle, &c., My Lord, Your Lordship.

The second Governors of Colonies, appointed by the Queen, are called Lieutenant-Governors.

TO INCORPORATE BODIES.

To the Hon. the Governors, Deputy-Governors, and Directors of the Bank of England, Your Honours.

To the Masters and Wardens of the Worshipful Company of Mercers, Your Worships.



JUVENILE BOOKS.

NEW SERIES OF EIGHTEENPENNY PRESENT AND PRIZE BOOKS.

Each Illustrated by Twenty-two Wood Engravings.
Foolscap 8vo, cloth, gilt edges.

1. DR. KANE—THE ARCTIC HERO. By M. JONES, Author of the "Black Prince," &c.
2. STORIES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY. By M. JONES.
3. STORIES FROM EUROPEAN HISTORY. By M. JONES.
4. BOOK OF BIBLE STORIES. By M. JONES.
5. BIOGRAPHIES OF GREAT MEN. By M. JONES.
6. SCENES AND SIGHTS IN BIBLE LANDS. By A. M. S.

NEW SERIES OF SHILLING BOOKS.

Profusely Illustrated. Foolscap 8vo, cloth.

1. WONDERS OF CREATION—Volcanoes and their Phenomena.
2. NATURE'S WONDERS—Pictures of Remarkable Scenes in Foreign Lands.
3. LIFE AND TRAVEL IN TARTARY, THIBET, AND CHINA. Being a Narrative of the Abbé Huc's Travels in the Far East. By M. JONES, Author of "Kane, the Arctic Hero," &c. &c.
4. NINEVEH AND ITS STORY. By M. JONES.
5. WONDERS OF THE VEGETABLE WORLD.

NEW SERIES OF ILLUSTRATED SIXPENNY BOOKS.

Post 8vo, 64 pp., Fancy Boards.

1. A PICTURE BOOK OF SPORTS AND PLAYS, FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.
2. MY PRETTY COUNTRY PICTURE BOOK,—OF LANE AND LAKE AND HILL AND BROOK.
3. PEEPS OF HOME AND HOMELY JOYS,—OF YOUTH AND AGE, OF GIRLS AND BOYS.
4. WALKS WITH MAMMA O'ER HILLS AND DALES,—WITH SIMPLE RHYMES AND PLEASING TALES.

T. NELSON AND SONS, LONDON, EDINBURGH, AND NEW YORK.